

Veterans' SERVICE BUREAU

EDITOR'S NOTE: This newspaper, through special arrangement with the Washington Bureau of Western Newspaper Union at 1616 Eye Street, N. W., Washington, D. C., is able to bring readers this weekly column on problems of the veteran and serviceman and his family. Questions may be addressed to the above Bureau and they will be answered in a subsequent column. No replies can be made direct by mail, but only in the column which will appear in this newspaper regularly.

Letter-Writing Rules

The Veterans' administration, faced with an unprecedented volume of correspondence and a shortage of trained personnel, has appealed to veterans everywhere to restrict their mail to official business and to follow certain rules to expedite its processing.

The Veterans' administration is now receiving approximately 125,000 letters per day in the central office here in Washington and the skeleton force is working overtime in an effort to keep up with the mail. Here are some rules which will aid in getting early answers to your letters:

1. Include the veteran's name, address, legibly written, in every letter;
2. Give the "C" number in letters relating to pensions, compensation, rehabilitation or training;
3. Include the "N," "V" or "K" numbers and the serial number of the veteran in each letter regarding insurance;
4. Give the "XC" number in the case of a deceased veteran.

Unless the "N" or policy number and serial number in insurance correspondence are given it means that a master index of 24,000,000 names must be checked for proper identification. This list contains 228,000 Smiths of whom 98,000 are named John and 13,000 have no middle initial. There are 150,000 Johnsons and 120,000 Browns.

Questions and Answers

Q. Have been reading your service bureau in the local papers. Our problem is this: We, who have lost our boys in this war and wish to bring them back want to know to whom to write and when. And when they arrive does the government employees, or the American Legion take care of services. Can there be a church funeral of the kind folks' choice? Please explain the procedure to be taken and oblige.—The Mothers of Rock County, Nebraska.

A.—The quartermaster corps is now making plans to bring the bodies of our war dead now in European cemeteries to this country at some future time, probably next spring. There is no transportation available now. They are making all inclusive plans and when these plans are complete, the next of kin of all our war dead will be notified and you will be advised of the proper procedure.

Q.—What is the proper procedure to locate a soldier we haven't heard from for nearly a year?—Mr. and Mrs. P. Lansing, Mich.

A.—Your best bet is to ask the aid of your local Red Cross, who will contact their field services. In case that is unavailing, write to the office of the Adjutant General, War department, Washington, D. C.

Q.—A soldier who has been killed in action was married and separated from his first wife, then divorced and married again. He has named his wife with whom he was living when he was called to the army as beneficiary in his insurance. Can the first wife get his insurance?—Mrs. E. P., Brownsville, Tenn.

A.—The wife who is now named as his beneficiary in his policy will get the insurance.

Q.—If a soldier receives his discharge by other than the point system, that is on a dependency charge, will he lose his mustering-out pay or privileges to which he is entitled under the G. I. Bill of Rights?—Worried Mother, Table Grove, Ill.

A.—If he was discharged on a dependency or convenience cause, he will lose his mustering-out pay, but not necessarily his benefits under the G. I. bill.

Q. Can a veteran of World War No. 1 get a pension if unable to work? Can a wife of a World War I veteran receive a pension at his death? Will the government furnish money or allowance at time of death of World War I veteran?—Wife, Miami, Texas.

A. The Veterans' administration says if a World War I veteran is totally disabled he is entitled to a non-service connected disability pension. If the widow of a World War I veteran is living with him at the time of his death or was separated through misconduct of the veteran, she is entitled to a pension of \$45 per month. The Veterans' administration pays \$100 to the undertaker for burial of a World War I veteran.

Q.—My husband will complete five years of service in February and has 80 points. He is in Manila with the T. C. 50th Service Bn. I was told a service unit is somewhat like a part of the occupational army. Is this so?—Mrs. M. T. Loleta, Calif.

A.—Actually a service battalion may not be part of an occupational unit, but a transportation corps, such as your husband is in, is to all practical purposes part of the occupational army for he may stay in Manila as long as he is needed there.

Washington MERRY-GO-ROUND

DREW PEARSON

PAT HURLEY ALWAYS A STORMY PETREL

WASHINGTON.—This town, dead-ly afraid of peacetime boredom, pricked up its ears and licked its chops when Pat Hurley issued his stentorian resignation as ambassador to China. It then settled down to enjoy a good show.

Washington has known Pat ever since 1912 when as a dashing young attorney from Oklahoma he used to appear before congressional committees for the Choctaw nation, and they know he always puts on a good show. Once in testifying before the senate insular affairs committee as secretary of war, Pat shouted: "You cannot call me a liar. You can run your star-chamber sessions without me. I have taken all I can stand." Whereupon he flounced out of the room.

Some years earlier, Pat appeared before the house Indian affairs committee to oppose opening the tribal rolls of the Choctaw nation to certain Indians who claimed they were eulched out of their tribal lands. And he was severely criticized by Webster Ballinger, who pointed out that just two years before, Hurley had represented the Wards, an Indian family which sought to have the Choctaw tribal rolls opened. Thus Hurley was in the position of arguing on both sides of the same question in the brief period of two years.

Pat was not quite as ferocious in those days, however, and for some unexplained reason did not threaten to kick Ballinger out of the committee room.

PATRICK J. O'HURLEY

Pat Hurley has come a long way from those days when Oklahoma was an Indian territory. Born O'Hurley, he dropped the "O" and the Catholic religion of his father to become a Baptist, and after working his way through an Indian college, he had the courage to come to Washington, take a law degree at George Washington, and marry the daughter of Adm. Henry B. Wilson, then and now one of the most beautiful ladies in the capital.

It is a long way from such lowly beginnings to his more recent interviews with Joe Stalin, his airplane flights through the Near East, and his powerful position as the right bower of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. But Pat has staged a colorful personal row at almost every milestone along the way.

In Chungking, he first rowed with Gen. Al Wedemeyer over the question of sending a mission to the so-called Communist section of China to evaluate the importance of its military strength. For a while he and Wedemeyer weren't speaking to each other though they occupied adjoining bedrooms in the same house.

Later at a Chungking cocktail party, Wedemeyer's chief of staff, Maj. Gen. Robert B. McClure, chided Hurley for sending General Marshall a telegram of protest against Wedemeyer.

"You pup," boomed the ex-cow-puncher from Oklahoma, "I've shot men for less than that."

Guests had to separate the two men. The Chinese looked on, amused but not impressed. In China it brings severe loss of face to fight in public.

"Pat is Pat," mused FDR when informed of the fuss, "and there's nothing you can do about him."

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

If you happen near the secondary office of Rep. Leslie Arends of Illinois, house Republican whip, deep in the sub-basement of the capitol, you can hear strange sounds echoing through the catacomb-like corridors.

Arends and his five colleagues are getting their voices in trim for a special trans-Atlantic broadcast of Christmas carols—in which six members of the British parliament also will join—to be aired by the Mutual network on December 20.

Familiar carols, such as "Oh, Little Town of Bethlehem" and "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" will be rendered by the legislators. The Americans and Britons will do a joint rendition of "Silent Night."

The other members of the Arends sextet are GOP Representatives Harve Tibbott of Pennsylvania, Paul Shafer of Michigan, Harry Towse of New Jersey, Frank Fellows of Maine and William Hill of Colorado.

The singing congressmen occasionally vary their practice sessions with "Sweet Adeline," according to Macon Reed, Mutual news reporter, a former army corporal who is helping to arrange the Christmas broadcast. However, Reed insists there is no "liquid encouragement" at such times.

CAPITAL CHAFF

California's new young Republican Sen. William F. Knowland was the only member of the senate to challenge Sen. Jim Eastland of Mississippi recently when Eastland made a lengthy speech attacking U. S. policy in Germany as too severe. . . . General Marshall was slated to become a director of the American Red Cross before Truman decided to send him to China. . . . Former GOP Congressman Mel Maas of Minnesota, a colonel in the marine aviation reserve, is back in Washington.

NEWS BEHIND THE NEWS

By PAUL MALLON

Released by Western Newspaper Union.

TRUMAN'S LABOR PLAN TO PASS CONGRESS

WASHINGTON.—President Truman's labor-cooling program was largely the inner handiwork of John R. Steelman, the New York conciliator who was quietly brought into a White House office some weeks back, and of Labor Secretary Schwelienbach.

Mr. Steelman has had a career of some 20 years or more as a labor conciliator in and out of the government. He has maintained an impeccable, judicial attitude, although some employers occasionally have regarded him as leaning a little more on labor's side than on theirs. Schwelienbach always has been a strong left-center union politico and judge.

This cooling and fact-sifting plan based upon railroad labor mediation, you may recall, was suggested as a solution in this column published October 30, and more specifically presented again on November 15 as an objective of the Labor-Management conference. My comment then was, "Such a solution would achieve stabilization of the current chaos rather swiftly."

Despite these objective or labor-saving origins of the proposal, the CIO auto workers and indeed even AFL President Green immediately protested and indicated they would resist.

In advance, Mr. Truman felt so sure that they would accept that he acted without legal authority to set up fact-finding commissions for the auto strike and for the threatened steel strike.

DECISION OF BOARD NOT TO BE BINDING

I think the basis of the union objections is not primarily to the plan itself. If the unions have a just case, they can get justice from the program. A final decision by one representative of labor, one of management and the third deciding man from the public, represents the best possible hearing labor could expect to get for its cause.

Even then the decision is not binding. It merely represents a public judgment as to what is right and just, and carries only the weight and power of its manifest fairness.

But the unions have built up a great pressure game now behind the auto workers' case. That strike was the front running test case for the 30 per cent wage increase demand, backed by all labor including Mr. Green and his AFL, although they have not said much about this phase.

White heat fervor has been worked up among the strikers and other union men eagerly watching the result of the contest. It is not often noticed in the public prints, but the human element, the human passion and excitement of leaders and men in strikes, is unquestionably a greater factor in the decisions which union leaders make than the wage facts of the matter, or the working conditions.

Nerves become frayed all down the line. Denunciation and recrimination of the managements, and vice versa, naturally characterize the negotiations rather than any cool consideration of the facts (see Thomas Raftery telegram to the President). The whole situation runs to emotionalism and propaganda on both sides.

Now, the Truman plan to eliminate all that and require both sides to submit their facts to impartial judgment, should have come out of the Labor-Management conference. The President and his advisers had planned it that way. From the inside, it would appear they leaned back too far in allowing the conferees to have their own head.

MILD TONE WILL FORCE PASSAGE

Mr. Steelman, for example, was careful not to see or communicate with anyone connected with either labor or management throughout the conference. Schwelienbach remained away also, and Mr. Truman only saw the delegates in occasional groups of threes and fours.

The great impetus which has made the railway labor mediation base program so successful (only one minor strike in 19 years) was because both labor and management wanted it and got together.

Resistance by the unions now to application of these sound settlement principles for the large strike cases in which the public has national interest may tend to impede the effective workings of the plan. The White House apparently believes that, after thinking it over, the unions will drop their resistance.

"This Is Our Homeland"



Alabama

FASCINATING CONTRASTS

By Edward Emerine, WNU Features.

THE mellowness of the old, the bustle of the new, the promise of the future. That is Alabama.

The stately ancestral mansions still remain but coal and iron mines nearby now teem with human activity. A forest of virgin timber may surround a forest of active smokestacks. The easy-going crossroads general store is not far from a modern highway or an airport. A great oak which sheltered Fernando De Soto holds its hoary moss over a laboratory where chemical magic is performed. Here is a hall where once swirled crinolines beneath thousand-candled chandeliers, and down the same street is a modern office building where business affairs are discussed. That's versatile, gracious Alabama.

The word "Alabama" in the Muskegean Indian tongue literally means "vegetation gatherers," or "thicket clearers." And well the word may, for Alabama's 200 types of soil grow more than 4,400 species of trees and plants as well as most of the agricultural products known to the temperate zone! Average annual rainfall is 53.87 inches, while the average annual temperature ranges from 60 degrees F. in the northern part of the state to 67 degrees F. near the coast. The growing season ranges from 190 days in the northern part to 300 days on the southern coast.

Cheaha mountain, the state's highest point, is 2,407 feet above sea level. Alabama stretches 336 miles from the Appalachian mountains to the Gulf of Mexico.

Not only is Alabama the land of corn and cotton. It also grows peanuts, hay and oats, truck crops and fruits, and in many sections has specialties such as water cress, gladioli and peonies, as well as its famed azaleas and camelia japonicas. There are many commercial nurseries.

In 1944, there were 1,255,000 head of cattle in the state, both beef and dairy type. Alabama has over a million head of hogs and 17,000,000 chickens. (Southern-fried? Yes, lots of 'em!) Alabama leads the nation in the shipment of live bees and queens.

Beneath the rich top soil, too, Alabama has great wealth. Its mines produce coal, iron ore, flake graphite, and clay and shale for brick-

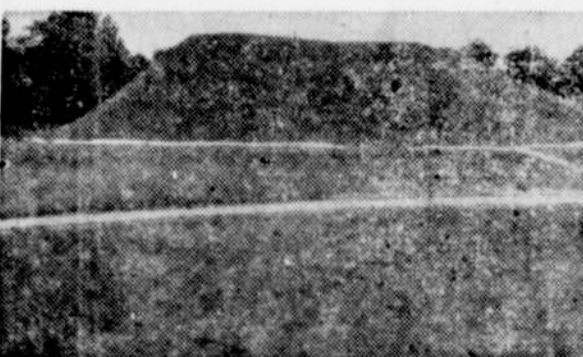


ALABAMA—Cotton State.
STATE FLOWER: Goldenrod.
MOTTO: We Dare Defend Our Rights.

readily available for the manufacture of iron and steel.

Alabama's state government has been streamlined. The state treasury holds a surplus of 40 million dollars. Its industries are expanding. Agriculture is prosperous. Natural resources are being conserved and wisely utilized. Rich by nature, Alabama is made richer by man's skill and intelligence. Alabamians travel toward new horizons.

Alabama passed through the throes of reconstruction after the Civil war, but emerged into a new era of development which continues steadily. With a temperate climate, fertile soil and raw materials, the possibilities for advancement and progress are portrayed vividly against the mellowness of the old South down in Alabama, where people are proud to say: "This is our homeland."



INDIAN MOUNDS, WATERFALLS. . . . Alabama's good highways and all-year-round climate bring scenic points close to those who live in the cities. Above picture shows the highest of the many Indian mounds found in the state. On the right is one of the state's famous waterfalls. With a rich historical background, Alabama has hundreds of old mansions and other spots for tourists to visit. The Alabama Memorial building is a treasure-house of documents, pictures and relics of the stirring days of '61 and other periods of the state's history. Every town retains its historical interest. In sharp contrast to virgin forests and waterfalls are the smokestacks of Alabama's industrial plants, the busy life of its cities and its many airports.



making. It has sandstone and marble for building, bauxite as a source for aluminum, quartzite and rock asphalt. Five oil wells are now producing in Choctaw county.

In industry, the state has lumber, shipbuilding, textiles, mines, cement, pipe plants, chemicals, steel, aluminum, hydroelectric plants and dozens of others which use by-products and farm products in manufacturing and processing.

The annual value of products manufactured in Alabama is more than twice the value of all farm products. Large industries using the state's natural resources have been successfully operating over long periods of years. The largest manufacturer of cotton ginning machinery in the world began its work in Alabama 136 years ago in Prattville. Large textile mills have operated 100 years.

The iron and steel industry is concentrated in the Birmingham district. Necessary coal and ore are

But they do not forget their heritage of the past.

DeSoto and his Spaniards passed through the lower Gulf country in 1540. Once a part of Louisiana, it was old Fort Louis de la Mobile on Mobile river that was made the capital in 1702. Mobile at its present site dates from 1711. Later Alabama was a part of the territory of Mississippi, formed in 1798, but became a separate territory in 1817 and a state in 1819. St. Stephens was the territorial capital, and Huntsville was the temporary seat of the first state government. Cahawba was the first state capital site, but the government moved to Tuscaloosa in 1826. It was not until 1847 that Montgomery became the permanent seat.

When Alabama seceded from the Union on January 11, 1861, the delegates from the southern states met at Montgomery and selected Jefferson Davis as president of the Confederacy. He was inaugurated at the present state capital.



GOVERNOR CHAUNCEY SPARKS

Elected governor in 1942, Chauncey Sparks, a bachelor, was a lawyer, judge and legislator before entering his high office. He was born at Eufaula, Ala. He is a graduate of Mercer university, Macon, and a member of the Baptist church.

Alabama's Forests

The forests of Alabama constitute one of its greatest assets, supporting 2,500 sawmills, 5 paper and pulp mills and 133 other wood-using industries, and giving employment to 100,000 people.

The state has approximately 19 million acres of forest growth. As some lands are cleared other lands are being planted to trees. Pines, cypress, red cedar and hemlock are principal soft woods, while hard woods include oak, red gum, etc.

