

Old Post Office Space Age Victim

LOGTOWN, Miss. (UPI) — One of the nation's oldest and smallest post offices, a faded frame building furnished with a wood stove, a rolltop desk and a rocking chair, is giving way to America's space program.

Mrs. Loolie B. Wright closed the office recently after serving 36 years as postmistress in the 209-square foot building here in the backwoods of southwest Mississippi.

The building will be demolished or moved to make sure it is not used as a dwelling with the huge buffer zone set up for testing Saturn space boosters. It is just one of many old buildings being torn down or hauled away to clear a 141,500-acre area for the static firing of moon rockets.

Logtown, once a thriving lumber town, is one of five towns that will be wiped out to make way for the test firings. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) wants to make sure no dwelling units remain in the buffer zone because vibrations from the tremendous firing noises might shatter the buildings.

Closing Day
NASA officials say noises from the static firings will be greater than from actual launchings because the rockets will be bolted to the pad and will not be released, confining all noise to the ground.

"All persons living in the buffer zone must be evacuated by next July, but Mrs. Wright decided on an early closing of the post office.

Waiting until next year would reduce her retirement benefits. "Anyway, I don't look forward to another Christmas mail

rush," the little white-haired postmistress said.

Her last day at the post office was Mrs. Wright's busiest in years. Collectors flooded her with specially printed envelopes and stamps to be cancelled on the last day of existence for the 80-year-old post office.

When Logtown was a booming lumber town after World War I the post office handled hundreds of letters daily. But the depression and dwindling lumber supplies ended the boom and mail volume in recent years was as little as 30 pieces per day.

Closing day was different. "I cancelled about 200 stamps that day," Mrs. Wright said. "They wanted me to cancel about 500, but I said I couldn't," she added, her hands still shaking from

the excitement of the closing day.

In its last days, the post office was a study in contrasts between the days of the wood stove and the age which is bringing millions of dollars of new roads, new buildings, new canals and moon rockets to these sparsely populated piney woods.

Next to dust-covered books from the 1930s were the post office's new zip number promotion leaflets. On bare old boards on the post office porch was a poster advertising a K-O polio campaign.

The post office had one room for Mrs. Wright to work in and a small foyer for residents to pick up their mail. A wood stove remained in use for heat or burning trash. A rolltop desk contained books that went back to 1935. A rocking chair provided a place for Mrs. Wright to read mail order catalogs and her Bible.

On the wall was a huge framed certificate signed by President Calvin Coolidge. Dated Jan. 27, 1927, it named Mrs. Wright postmistress of Logtown.

Behind the frame rested a Bay St. Louis newspaper, dated Aug. 12, 1938. It carried the story of the death of Mrs. Wright's sister.

Hit By Flood
The bottom of the rolltop desk was faded badly, a result of a 1961 flood that brought more than a foot of Pearl River water into the post office and forced Mrs. Wright to distribute mail elsewhere for three days.

That flood was one of the biggest disasters in Logtown history. But it took the 1947 hurricane to halt Mrs. Wright's mail service for one day—the only time it was interrupted in her 36 years.

"The hurricane hit on Friday and I was told not to open on Saturday," she said. "By Monday the water was gone but the place was filled with mud from that old black river."

Mail once was delivered to

the post office directly from the river. At one time it was delivered twice a day.

"That was wonderful for a place like this," she said.

Old green shades, each full of holes, hang over the three windows in the building. "Don't pull them, the whole thing might come down," Mrs. Wright cautioned.

Attached to the front of the building and extending above the rusty tin roof was a painted tree branch — the post office flag pole. Raising and lowering the flag was another of Mrs. Wright's jobs.

"This was a meeting place for Logtown," she said. "Everybody came here."

Well, not everybody. Mrs. Wright personally delivered mail to residents who were too old or ill to get to the post office.

Will Be Missed
"People depended on me for a lot of things," she said. Now Mrs. Wright is moving to nearby Pearlinton, where she was raised. She appeared to be taking in stride the closing of the post office, her retirement and the condemning of Logtown.

The people will miss her and she will miss them. "But I'll keep busy doing my housework," she said.

The day after she closed the office an elderly Negro man walked across the open field in front of the building, a letter in his hand. Mrs. Wright met him at the porch.

"Relly," she said, "we don't have any more mail here."

The old man looked at her in disbelief.

"If we want to mail a letter now we have to go to Pearlinton," she told him.

"We do?" he asked.

"Yes, we have to go to Pearlinton now," she said.

The old man mumbled and walked away. Soon he too will have to leave this area to make way for moon rockets.

Scientists Plan To Make Study In Bolivia

By FRANK RAMOS
NEW YORK (UPI) — A group of American scientists will journey into the relatively uninhabited lowlands of Eastern Bolivia next April in an effort to determine the cause of the deadly disease hemorrhagic fever.

A team of scientists from the American Museum of Natural History will join with medical teams in Bolivia in an attempt to locate the ectoparasites which are believed to carry the disease.

The disease, which causes internal bleeding and other symptoms, has afflicted at least 600 persons in Bolivia during the past four years with a mortality rate of approximately 20 per cent.

Dr. Richard G. Van Gelder, who will head the museum's scientific team, said his group will collect mammals in the area and the ectoparasites which they carry. He said their primary objective will be to determine whether or not the hemorrhagic fever virus can be found in the animal population of the region.

The museum team will work together with scientists from the Middle America Research Unit (MARU), an agency of the National Institute of Health and the Walter Reed Research Institute, which has been trying to isolate the virus.

Dr. Van Gelder said the expedition would probably last about six months, the scientists would travel along the Rio Itenez living in a 53-foot houseboat complete with a laboratory. They would make numerous stops to collect animals and carry out their research.

Dr. Van Gelder said the greatest problem will be one in logistics.

"There are no roads, few people, an uncertain food supply and no adequate geographic information about the area in which we will work," he said. "The region is biologically unexplored."

He said, however, that the boat would be stocked with a six-month food supply and would provide purified water.

The team from MARU has been working in the area for the past six months in an all-out program to isolate the virus, determine what animals are carrying the disease and find the modes of transmission.

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Gunnar Jahn, chairman of the Peace Prize Committee, said in handing the prize to Pauling: "No one would suggest that the nuclear test ban in itself is the work of Linus Pauling. But does anyone believe that this treaty would have been reached now if there had been no responsible scientist who tirelessly, unflinchingly, year in, year out, had impressed on the authorities and on the general public the real menace of nuclear tests?"

Diphtheria Hits Oklahoma Area

STILWELL, Okla. (UPI) — Officials Tuesday fought a diphtheria epidemic with mass inoculations at this eastern Oklahoma city, less than 10 miles from the Arkansas border.

Thirteen persons in Adair County have been struck with the disease. Additionally, three persons died from what was believed to be diphtheria. This, however, has not been confirmed.

The persons known to have diphtheria are undergoing treatment at hospitals in Oklahoma City and Stilwell and at Prairie Grove and Siloam Springs, Ark.

Health officials inoculated 700 persons Monday and 500 others last Friday after the spreading disease brought alarm.

Tuesday, persons from throughout the county flocked to Stilwell to take part in the program. A total of 6,875 doses for children and adults were sent to Stilwell.

Dr. T. Kirk Mosley, director of the state health department, said the major emphasis now is on the prevention of new cases.

"When the critical aspect of the epidemic is over, we can spend more time on being detectives and tracking down the source."

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Halloween Drugs Bring Penalties

COLLINGSWOOD, N. J. (UPI) — A man and woman have been fined \$1.00 each for "reckless disregard" in giving drugs and tranquilizers to a number of children making "trick or treat" calls last Halloween.

Frederick E. Waterhouse, 60, of Collingswood, and Mrs. Edna McCrory, 39, of Philadelphia, were convicted by Municipal Judge David Greenberg. They also were given six months suspended sentences.

Four children testified during the seven hour trial. John Kostner, 8, testified he heard Mrs. McCrory laughing inside the house after he and his twin brother had been given cellophane-wrapped packages of "chandy pills."

Mrs. McCrory admitted laughing but said she was amused at the costumes of the two boys. She said she made a mistake in thinking the pills she found in a cookie tin in the Waterhouse home were candy.

The judge found Mrs. McCrory guilty of reckless disregard for not having inquired about the pills. He said Waterhouse was responsible for his home and what was in it.

Waterhouse said the pills had been prescribed for his late wife during her fatal illness.

Pauling Receives Nobel Prizes in Norway Ceremony

OSLO, Norway (UPI)—Linus Pauling, a leader of the anti-bomb movement in the United States, and two International Red Cross organizations received Nobel Peace prizes Tuesday in ceremonies before King Olav V.

Pauling won the \$50,000 prize for 1962, which was not awarded until this year. He won the prize for physics in 1954, and is the only man to have won two Nobel prizes.

The League of Red Cross Societies and the International Red Cross Committee received the 1963 Peace Prize.

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