

THE CAROMOUNT NEWS

Published each month by and for the employees of the Wilson and Caromount Divisions of Sidney Blumenthal and Company, Inc.

DECEMBER, 1949

Editor ----- R. Quillen Ward
 Ass't. Editor ----- George Harper
 Ass't. Editor ----- Georgine Pittman
 Reporters—D. W. Adams, Herman Allen, Mattie Barnhill, Ray Barnhill, E. B. Davis, Inez Dawes, Mark Lee Dickens, Mae Dickerson, Estelle Driver, Elizabeth English, Perry English, Julius T. Eppes, Walter Greenman, Floyd Hedgepeth, Vivian Hodges, Calvin Jones, Lee Robert Joyner, Audrey Lanier, William Marsh, James Modlin, Myrtle Wranch, Susie Peaden, Mildred Poston, Garland Rose, Lula Solmon, Jim Speight, E. H. Suessmuth, Randolph Sutton, Tiny Sutton, Evelyn Taylor, Pete Thompson, R. W. Tippett, Vera Viverette, Viola Walston, Maud Ward, Paul Wells, Gladys Whitley, Billy Williams, Morris Williams, Will Young, Julia Sutton.

Send News for the January Issue to Personnel Office before January 10.

Devotional Thoughts

Christmas means many things to many people. It is the festival of children and of the home, to be sure. Nevertheless, to begin and to end with a sentimental response is not enough; one must proceed to worship and consecrated action.

The heart of the Christmas story is that "He came unto His own . . . and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." As Mary and Joseph, the shepherds and the angels, and the wise men from afar worshipped the new born King, so we bow in reverence, wonder and humility.

That we are His own, we know through the revelation of God in Christ. Christmas inspires us anew with this knowledge and all evidence to the contrary are the results of sins which may be forgiven.

Sometimes it is difficult for us and for others to believe that we are His own. What we do with our God-given intelligence and spiritual qualities, what we do with our education and skills, make one suspect our noble inheritance. But no, Christmas tells us that "He came unto His own", and that we, at our best, are His.

This truth makes Christmas more than music and poetry; it affords the strength, the inspiration and sure knowledge necessary for mankind to usher in the Kingdom of God, that the song of the heavenly host, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men," may fill the hearts and minds of men and women everywhere.

The Rev. Clarence E. Hobgood, Rector, St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, Wilson, N. C.

NO. 3 A CAREER IN GOVERNMENT

It's Your Federal Government

By Robert L. Johnson

As the largest employer of civilian workers on this continent the United States Government, it must be admitted, has a lot to learn about personnel relations and procurement.

Its total civilian payroll lists over two million employees who draw combined annual salaries of more than \$5.6 billions. And yet these employees, although protected by Civil Service regulations and other safeguards, voluntarily quit their jobs at a rate of about 500,000 a year.

Obviously there is something wrong with a concern from which every fourth worker resigns. In the years 1945-1948, inclusive, the government lost 3.9 million workers and hired 2.8 million, making a total of 6.7 million personnel movements in three years.

This turnover has been very expensive and wasteful. The cost of processing and training replacements reaches astronomical figures. Members of the Hoover Commission task force pointed out that a saving of only ten per cent of the government payroll costs of \$6.5 billion would mean an annual saving of \$600 million.

The Commission made the interesting discovery that discharges for cause from the federal employment are very rare. The task force studied this question closely. It concluded that the same percentage of government employees were prone to inefficiency, carelessness and disinterest in their jobs as in any other organization. Yet such employees are kept on, the task force found, because of the time and trouble entailed in discharging them.

It developed that it takes an average of seven months of red tape, hearings, appeals and paperwork to discharge an incompetent employee. One case was found in which a "stenographer," who was unable to take and transcribe dictation, was finally induced to resign after 21 months. No less than 45 specific charges of carelessness, incompetence, inefficiency, insubordination,—and worse—were proved against this one employee.

The report also studied the question of "empire building". This means the practice of some bureau chiefs in deliberately "building up" their own jobs and salaries by hiring unnecessary employees to do unnecessary work.

The mission of the bipartisan Hoover Commission was to delve into this and some 24 other major problems of government and to make recommendations for economy and efficiency. The Commission, in a 19-column report to Congress found ways in which, I personally believe, at least \$4 billions a year can be saved without curtailing government services. President Truman and former President Herbert Hoover are jointly urging Congress to pass the laws that will make these savings possible.

In the field of personnel management the Commission suggested:

That each government agency set up its own recruiting service. At present all recruiting is handled by the Civil Service Commission.

That the heads of agencies interest themselves in obtaining career employees of high calibre and in their advancement.

That salary ceilings be raised for career employees.

That greater efforts be made to place qualified veterans in civil employment.

When the Civil Service Commission was created in 1883 it had control of only 10 percent of all applicants for federal employment. There were then about 100,000 federal civil employees. In the interest of fairness, the Commission applied the merit system and obtained workers through competitive examination. At that time this system was satisfactory.

But when the federal payroll expanded into the millions, and about 1500 different skills were required by government, the system became inadequate. But it has not been changed. Today there are sometimes 250,000 applicants for a single nation-wide examination.

A man with outstanding abilities needed by government cannot, as in private employment, go to the head of the appropriate agency and apply for a job. He must wait for the announcement of an examination in his line. If he passes, he may get a job. Even if he does, the time required from the first application to his actual appointment may be as long as nine months. Most of this is carried on by correspondence in a vast haze of paperwork and form-filling. The Hoover Commission discovered that more than 40 percent of all eligible candidates got tired of waiting and dropped the idea during this waiting period. The Commission's suggestion for agency recruitment will overcome this condition.

Rebecca Edwards



A welcome relief from the chills of winter is the picture of Little Miss Rebecca Edwards enjoying surf fishing at Kure Beach, N. C. Becky is the daughter of Wahab Edwards, Mill Comptroller and Caromount fisherman of renown.



Robert Glenn Shepard, age 17, the son of Mrs. Essie Shepard (Weaving) is shown here. Robert left Rocky Mount November 16, 1949, to report to Fort Jackson, S. C., where he will receive his basic training in the United States Army.

Births

Richard Hill Ezzelle

Mr. and Mrs. Herman Ezzelle announce the birth of a son, Richard Hill Ezzelle, November 30, 1949. Herman Ezzelle is employed in the Warring Department.