

### DEPUTY BECOMES COMMISSIONER

Secretary of Commerce Sinclair Weeks announced in a press release of January 14 the resignation of Francis V. du Pont as Commissioner and the appointment of Charles D. Curtiss to that office. Mr. du Pont's new assignment is Special Assistant to the Secretary, in which capacity he will assist the Secretary in developing the President's 10-year National Highway Program.

Secretary Weeks praised both officials on their records in the highway field. He cited Mr. du Pont's wide experience and ability in both State and Federal highway executive responsibilities, and Mr. Curtiss' fine record as a career official in the administration of the Bureau.

Mr. Curtiss has been with Public Roads for more than 35 years. During World War I, he served as Captain in the U. S. Army Engineers on overseas duty in charge of all road work in the Angers, France, dis-

trict. At the conclusion of his military service in 1919, he was employed by the Bureau as Assistant to the Chief of Bureau in which capacity he served for 8 years. In the years following until his appointment as Commissioner, he was in charge of finance and management activities of Public Roads. In 1943 his title was made Deputy Commissioner.

Mr. Curtiss has long been active in the affairs of the American Society of Civil Engineers; he was first secretary of the highway division and continued the work for 25 years. He is also a member of the American Association of State Highway Officials, the Highway Research Board, and the Cosmos Club.

Mr. Curtiss has received the following awards: a diploma by the ASCE for distinguished service, the Exceptional Service Gold Medal Award of the Department of Commerce, and the Michigan State College Alumnae Award.

### New Assignments

JAMES C. ALLEN, former assistant deputy commissioner of Finance and Management, was appointed acting deputy commissioner on January 17.

H. T. ANDERSON, W. D. HANSEN and J. D. KELLER, junior engineers, completed the forest and park assignment of the training program in Montana, and have begun the production cost phase of the course. Messrs. Anderson and Keller are working in the Spokane area of Division 8 and Mr. Hansen is in Division 7.

WILLIAM H. BAUGH transferred to the Arizona District Office in January to take over the duties of area engineer. He was formerly with the Division 7 Office.

ROBERT D. BEE, highway engineer, was recently assigned to the New Jersey District Office. Mr. Bee completed the junior engineer

training program in July and was then assigned to forest and park work in Division 8.

JOSEPH N. BRADLEY joined the Hydraulic Research Branch in January. Mr. Bradley was employed by the Bureau of Reclamation Hydraulic Laboratory at Denver for the past 24 years.

FRANK BUNDSCHUH, Sr., maintenance superintendent on forest roads in the California District Office, has been given a short assignment in Nepal as a special adviser to aid in organizing and equipping a force to reconstruct highways damaged by recent floods. For the past year, Mr. Bundschuh has been handling maintenance on the Klamath and Trinity River sections of forest roads.

RICHARD C. COWDERY and WALTER L. MCCAUSLAND, junior engineers, returned to Division 1 in January for the Federal-aid phase of their

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### The Fish Story

Reporters for The News in Public Roads are rapidly acquiring the journalistic know-how of professional reporters. No one has yet reported that a Public Roads employee has bitten a dog (it is not news when a dog bites a man) but we do have a report that a bridge pier is rising rather than settling.

Clem J. O'Connor of our Frankfort, Kentucky office describes a bridge pier that is defying all of the laws of gravitation. It is one of the supports of the Kennedy Mill Bridge that carries the Burgin-Buena Vista Highway across Herrington Lake. The lake was created in the course of a hydro-electric development.

The pier, one of five supporting the bridge, is a 230-foot chimney type, concrete structure. It had risen approximately two and one-half feet out of the bed of the river and tilts upstream and toward the east bank about 12 inches. It has been dubbed "the floating pier." Maintenance measures taken by the Kentucky Department of Highways have prevented damage to the superstructure.

Cause of the movement is a matter of conjecture. All five of the piers supporting the bridge are supposed to be on solid rock. The "floating pier," highest of them all, is in the river gorge proper and stands in over 150 feet of water. Pier 3 (190 feet) also rests in the gorge but has given no trouble. Consultants have been called in to examine the pier, but no satisfactory explanation has been given. Various opinions have been advanced. One is that there are trapped gases under the footing. Another is that the rising is due to hydrostatic pressure. Still another is that the whole cliff on the Mercer County side may be slowly moving toward the Lake. There is the possibility that the bottom of the river has heaved. But perhaps as good an explanation as any is that there is a big fish down under the pier that moves around from time to time.





ACCUMULATED SICK LEAVE

Considerable publicity by Washington newspapers has been given in recent weeks to "1,000 hour clubs" in government agencies. A. C. Taylor of the Philippine Division volunteered the information that 4 of the 11 employees stationed there had 1,000 and more hours of sick leave to their credit at the end of the leave year 1954. In order to get a Bureau-wide comparison, a poll was taken of all Public Roads employees entitled to leave, and the results are shown in the tabulation below. The number of people was so large that it is impractical to list the names.

	Number of employ- ees	Number with 1,000 hrs.	Per- cent of total
Washington Office....	815	31	3.8
Div. 1.....	126	12	9.5
Div. 2.....	115	6	5.2
Div. 3.....	148	25	16.9
Div. 4.....	107	8	7.5
Div. 5.....	127	12	9.4
Div. 6.....	78	7	9.0
Div. 7.....	315	30	9.5
Div. 8.....	722	36	5.0
Div. 9.....	267	23	8.6
Div. 15....	304	9	3.0
Foreign Of- fices.....	103	7	6.8
Total...	3,227	206	6.4

In looking over these figures, it is difficult to determine the healthiest place to live, but there is strong indication that the States in Division 3 come nearest to qualifying. Possibly the common cold has not invaded "Dixie." To increase your longevity—"Go South." In order to make a fair comparison of the different areas, a number of factors would have to be considered such as average length of service, transfers of personnel, the male--female ratio, the number of seasonal employees, etc.

The shortest possible time in which any employee could have accumulated 1,000 hours, provided no sick leave was used, would be 8-3/4 years. In other words, their employment would have to date from about April 1946 to reach 1,000. The maximum number of hours that any employee could have accumulated by the end of the year 1954 was 1,034. There were many employees throughout the Bureau in the 900-hour or more category who just missed the 1,000-hour level by the narrowest of margins.

All of us will agree that sick leave policy is one of the greatest benefits of the career service. It is the kind of leave that we hope we will not have to use, especially for extended periods. Certainly the accumulation of a substantial amount gives an employee a great sense of security. Recently there has been some discussion in Washington newspapers regarding possible measures to prevent the abuse of the sick leave privilege.

Resignations and Transfers

T. V. BOHNER, materials engineer for Division 5, transferred to the Federal Civil Defense Administration at Battle Creek, Mich., in January.

BENJAMIN COTTRELL, engineer for the Virginia District Office, resigned in December. Mr. Cottrell accepted a position in Beirut, Lebanon, with Knappen, Tippetts, Abbott and McCarthy of New York City.

Mrs. RUTH B. ERNST, secretary in the Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Division of Research, resigned in January to assume the duties of housewife. Mrs. Ernst had completed about 21 years of government service, of which 20 were with Public Roads.

AMBROSE G. HAMPTON, head of the Design Section of the North Carolina District Office, resigned to become assistant to the president of the State Publishing Company of Columbia, S. C. Mr. Hampton came to Public Roads in 1936, after a number of years of employment in construction work for the South Carolina Highway Department.

HAROLD A. LEE, transportation economist for the Highway Statistics Section, Division of Research, resigned in January to return to private employment in Morgantown, W. Va. Mr. Lee, a Public Roads employee since 1951, will assist his father in an electrical and mining business.

GARNET B. SUTPHIN and ERNEST OWNBY of the Florence, Ala., District Office of Division 15 transferred to the National Park Service at Tupelo, Miss.

Professional Activities

C. C. HALLVIK, highway engineer in the Idaho District Office, was elected president of the Idaho Society of Professional Engineers at its annual convention in Boise, January 15-16. The Idaho Society is affiliated with the National Society of Professional Engineers.

Personals

JOHN M. DEMMER, engineer for the Colorado District Office, and Angela Eisenman were married on December 27. Mr. and Mrs. Demmer returned to Denver after a trip to Mexico City.

MERRILL TOWNSEND, engineer for the Bridge Branch, Division of Engineering, and Lyda Mae Patterson of Washington, D. C., were married on December 11. Proud parents of new offspring are the following:

WILLIAM R. FRERICH, Highway Transport Research Branch, a daughter, Suzanne, born in January.

ROBERT D. HUNTER, Maine District Office, a daughter, Margaret Ann, born in December.

NATHAN LIEDER, Financial and Administrative Research Branch, a son, Michael David, born in December.

HARLAN D. PATTERSON, Utah District Office, a daughter, Rosalie June, born in November.

DAVID SOLOMON, Highway Transport Research Branch, a son, Dan, born in December.

THOMAS J. STOKES, Mississippi District Office, a daughter, Mary Harrell, born in November.

Public Roads employees completing short tours of active duty with the military in recent months were as follows: Lt. Col. H. M. BREMER, North Carolina District Office, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Durham, N. C.; Maj. H. L. MALLORY, Division 3 Office, also at Durham, N. C.; and Lt. Comdr. CHARLES P. PRESCOTT, Nebraska District Office, Navy Civil Engineers Officers School, Port Hueneme, Calif.

WILLIAM F. FITZER, engineer in Division 9, graduated recently from the University of Colorado with the degree of Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering. Mr. Fitzer, an employee of Public Roads since 1947, completed most of his academic work in night school, and is to be complimented on this achievement.

C. V. SMITH, engineer for the Massachusetts District Office, was the recipient of one of the trophies awarded by the Wampatuck Golf Club. Mr. Smith won the opening day club tournament with the low net score of 69.

Seasons Greetings' Exchange

The employees of the Pennsylvania District Office decided to dispense with the customary mailing of Christmas cards to each other. Instead they sent through "Care", 48 food packages to needy people in Asia and Europe.

AWARDS

The Department of Commerce annual program for presentation of the exceptional service gold medal, the meritorious service silver medal, and length-of-service awards took place on February 23. The Secretary of Commerce presented awards to all recipients in the Washington metropolitan area in the Commerce Auditorium. Appropriate ceremonies for employees in the field offices have been arranged. Public Roads employees receiving awards were as follows:

Exceptional Service,  
Gold Medal Award

EARL F. KELLEY, Chief of the Physical Research Branch, Wash., D. C.

Meritorious Service,  
Silver Medal Award

FRANK P. ALEXANDER, Chief Accountant, Wash., D.C.; DUDLEY P. BABCOCK, Bridge Engineer, Wash., D. C.; Miss O. LOUISE EVANS, Librarian, Wash., D. C.; FRED KELLAM, Division Bridge Engineer, Chicago, Ill.; JACK E. LEISCH, Chief of Design Development Section, Wash., D. C.; Miss FRANCES PRICE, Administrative Assistant, Wash., D. C.; CARL W. RIESLEY, Administrative Manager, Division 15, Arlington, Va.; AUGUST SHOFR, District Engineer, Columbus, Ohio; ARTHUR L. SHAVER, Division Administrative Officer, Atlanta, Ga.; JOHN D. SHAW, Division Construction and Maintenance Engineer, San Francisco, Calif.; HARRY E. STARK, Division Urban Engineer, Atlanta, Ga.; JOHN L. STINSON, District Engineer, Harrisburg, Pa.; EDGAR A. STROMBERG, Asst. to Branch Chief, Research Reports Branch, Wash., D. C., and JOHN A. SWANSON, Division Programing and Planning Engineer, Kansas City, Mo.

Length-of-service Awards

WILLIAM A. GRANT, Engineering Aid, Physical Research Branch, Wash., D. C. (This is the first 50-year length-of-service award in Public Roads.)

Forty year length-of-service emblems were awarded to the following:

JULIUS H. BRANNAN, Design Engineer, Phoenix Ariz.; B. PAUL BURTIS, Design Engineer, Wash., D. C.; SAMUEL J. CAPERTON, Highway Engineer, Denver, Colo.; ALBERT C. DUNN, Design Engineer, Hagerstown, Md.; MACK GALBREATH,

District Engineer, Frankfort, Ky.; CARLOS S. HAYNES, Mechanical Engineer, Physical Research Branch, Wash., D. C.; ARTHUR L. HOOPER, District Engineer, Raleigh, N. C.; ANSELM X. MARILLEY, Design Engineer, Wash., D. C.; ROLAND E. NAIRN, Fiscal Accounting Clerk, Wash., D. C.; Mrs. KATIE G. SHEDD, Administrative Assistant, Wash., D. C.; and FRANCIS W. SMITH, District Engineer, Ogden, Utah.

Suggestion Award

An award was made recently to Mrs. EVALYN W. WAGGONER, clerk-stenographer, in the California District Office, for her proposal that official personnel information of general interest to all employees be disseminated by the periodic issuance of a newsletter or other media. As a result of this suggestion, official personnel and administrative items are now being included in The News in PUBLIC ROADS.

Position Classification

The Civil Service Commission, through the Department of Commerce, has placed upon Public Roads the authority and responsibility to classify our positions in accordance with the provisions of the Classification Act of 1949 and in conformity with Commission standards.

Negotiations and correspondence with our operating officials resulting from position audits by the Commission and Bureau classifiers indicate that a clear understanding of the proper basis for increasing the grade of a position is lacking in many instances. This article will clarify several points in this connection and emphasize their importance.

BASIS FOR CLASSIFICATION

It is frequently called to our attention that a certain employee is deserving of a grade increase (1) because of many years of faithful service to the Bureau of Public Roads, or (2) because of general capabilities and experience. Neither item bears on classification. The duties and responsibilities involved in the performance of the position are the sole criteria for determining position classification. Whether we agree that this is the proper basis of classification, it is both the law and regulation of the Civil Service Commission; therefore, we must be governed accordingly.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Position descriptions are often lengthy, vaguely written, and lack concise, correct, and complete statements of duties performed. In the allocation of many positions it is necessary to glean only 10 or 15 percent of the pertinent sentences from a long 3- to 6-page description in order to get a clear picture of the duties performed. Position descriptions should be written in a clear, concise manner, remembering that it is completeness and accuracy of statement that helps the classifiers rather than length of statement. The very minor and incidental duties performed usually can be omitted. Each specific duty should be contained in a separate paragraph and time percentages should be shown for each.

GRADE DETERMINATION

There is confusion concerning the relation of position classification to employee qualification requirements, quality of work performance, and length of service. These are separate requirements which affect the employee rather than the position. Although an employee may meet such qualification requirements as education, training, or the possession of Civil Service examination rating, and be otherwise eligible for promotion, it does not follow that the duties and responsibilities of the position he occupies warrant classification at a higher grade. The grade of a position is based solely upon the actual duties and responsibilities of the position and not upon the qualifications or length of service of the incumbent.

Conversely, the classification of a position does not mean that the employee performing the duties of the position has met the eligibility and qualification requirements for reassignment or promotion to the newly classified position.

Continued experience in the performance of the duties and responsibilities of a position are not sufficient justification for increasing the grade of that position. Recognition of increased worth through experience on the job is provided for by periodic salary increases within the salary range of the grade.

Although length of service is commendable, the fact that an employee may be at the top of his grade is not a proper basis for reclassifying his position. Rewards for long, faithful, and satisfactory service are provided for by



longevity step increases beyond the maximum rate of pay for each three years of continuous service completed at or above the maximum rate, up to a total of three such increases, for employees with an aggregate period of ten years service in the same or higher grades.

#### THE CLASSIFIER'S JOB

Determination of the GS grade of a particular position is a process of analysis and evaluation that is far more difficult than may seem. When there is available a complete, correct, and understandable SF-75 (job description sheet) the process consists of comparing the duties and responsibilities set forth therein with the standards issued by the Civil Service Commission. This process is simply stated but it is not an act so easily done. The process of allocation is more difficult when the SF-75 is not well written. The description may omit to state the degree of responsibility carried, or the exact division of responsibility between supervisor and supervised or between co-employees. Often in the process of allocation of a specific position it becomes necessary to examine the position descriptions of 2 to 5 positions which are related in the operational process.

The difficulties involved in classifying positions from merely reading the SF-75 can be largely overcome by having the classifier interview the employee at his post of duty. In this manner questions and answers largely overcome the deficiencies of the written description of the position.

The grade of a given position, say a secretary, is determined by the manner in which she is required to work. The grade of a similar position in a similar office is not usable evidence. For instance, the supervisor of Secretary A requires that she handle most phone calls, make all appointments, compose answers to letters, and keep him briefed on important developments. The supervisor of Secretary B elects to do these items himself, leaving for his secretary only typing, dictation, and the mere directing of visitors in to see her boss. Obviously, the position of Secretary B cannot be allocated as high as the position of Secretary A. However, many supervisors do not realize that their failure to place responsibility in the hands of the secretary holds down her position.

#### SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of supervisory personnel to assume initial responsibility for judging whether proposed promotions are justifiable on the basis of the duties and responsibilities of positions in accordance with Civil Service standards. It must also be recognized that there are grade ceilings to advancement in all types of work—professional, sub-professional, administrative, and clerical.

#### Obituaries

JAMES H. BEACH, an employee of the Physical Research Branch for more than 30 years, died at Sibley Memorial Hospital on December 24, following an operation. As a laboratory machinist in the shops at Gravelly Point and Langley Research Stations, Mr. Beach played an important part in the construction of many pieces of special testing equipment.

JOHN L. HUMBARD, former Division Engineer in Ethiopia, died in a Knoxville hospital January 5 at the age of 62 after a long illness.

Mr. Humbard entered Public Roads in 1932 after 10 years experience as a private contractor. As senior construction supervisor, he was in charge of the larger day-labor camps of the Eastern National Parks and Forests Division.

During his career, Mr. Humbard served on many assignments outside the United States. He was in charge of the construction of the Trans-Isthmian and Chorrera-Rio Hato Highways in Central America, served as liaison between the Army Engineers and the Bureau on the Alaska Highway, and directed the road-building program in Ethiopia. Declining health made necessary his return to the United States in 1953. Mr. Humbard was awarded in 1952 the Department's Gold Medal Award for exceptional service.

*The Bureau of Public Roads extends its sympathy to the bereaved families.*

#### Retirements

Mrs. RUTH P. BRODERICK, Research Reports Branch, retired from Public Roads on December 31. Mrs. Broderick, a native of Georgetown, began her service with the Federal Government in March 1923 as an employee of the Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Economics.

During 1932 Mrs. Broderick was placed on furlough along with many

other employees by the Department of Agriculture in their reduction in force program, at which time she accepted a temporary assignment with the General Accounting Office. The following year she joined the Bureau of Public Roads as an employee of the Records Branch. In 1942 she transferred to the Highway Statistics Section of the Research Reports Branch and continued there until her retirement. Altogether, Mrs. Broderick completed nearly 32 years of service.

LEVANT R. BROWN retired from Public Roads in November after completing 46 years of government service, the last 35 of which were with the Bureau.

Mr. Brown received his degrees from Purdue University, and shortly thereafter accepted a position in the Philippine Islands as civil and district engineer for the Bureau of Public Works. In 1919 he was appointed senior highway engineer in the San Francisco Office of the Bureau. He later became assistant to the Division Engineer in charge of all National Forest and Park highways in Division 7.

Mr. Brown received the Meritorious Service Award from the Department of Commerce in February 1954. During World War I he served as captain with the Corps of Engineers in the Philippines, and during World War II was in charge of the Fort St. John Division of the Alaska Highway.

JACOB M. GROESBECK, road foreman in the Utah District Office, retired in December. Mr. Groesbeck, a Public Roads employee for the past 25 years, supervised much of the post-construction work performed in Utah and Idaho. Prior to his Federal service, he worked with several contracting organizations.

REX A. MACK, Division 8, retired in December after nearly 40 years of Federal service. In recent years Mr. Mack has been resident engineer on many important Federal projects.

W. J. SISSON of Division 8 retired at the end of January following 23 years of employment on Federal highway projects.

PORTER S. TILLOTSON, administrative manager for the Colorado District Office, retired in December after more than 34 years with Public Roads. His service included 23 1/2 years in the Utah District Office, 2 years on the Alaska Highway, and 9 years in the Colorado District Office. Previous to his employment with Public Roads, he served for 2 years in the Ordnance Department

of the Army during World War I. Mr. and Mrs. Tillotson will make their home in Salt Lake City, Utah.

GORDON C. TRUE, fiscal auditor for Division 2, will retire at the end of February. He will have completed nearly 27 years of Federal service, 20 of which have been with the Bureau. Mr. True transferred to Division 2 from the Division of Control (Wash., D. C.) in 1939.

#### Illnesses

Mrs. ELIZABETH ABBOTT, administrative assistant in the California District Office, sustained a fracture of her right wrist as the result of a fall in her home on Christmas Day. Despite her injury, she is on the job and is rapidly becoming proficient at operating a typewriter with her left hand.

JOE L. AGNEW, engineer with the Minnesota District Office, suffered a heart attack in January. It is expected that he will be hospitalized for about 6 weeks, and will then be at home for a period of recuperation.

F. A. DAVIS, District Engineer for Mississippi, after being hospitalized for a short period in January, is convalescing at his home in Jackson. He is expected to be confined for at least a month.

W. F. HASTINGS, of the Pennsylvania District Office underwent surgery during December, and is now making good progress toward recovery at his home in Washington.

ROBERT L. JAMES, road foreman for the Arizona District Office, was severely burned in an electrical accident at the district shop. He is currently undergoing extensive skin grafting treatment to restore full use of his hands.

THOMAS LAWRENCE, engineer in the Maine District Office, returned to work in January following recovery from a heart attack which occurred late last year.

CHARLES W. MOURHESS, engineer for the Colorado District Office, slipped on an icy sidewalk and fractured his right ankle. Fortunately, a walking cast was applied and very little time was lost due to the accident.

#### Health Protection

Division 8 employees, in common with other Federal workers in the area, recently were offered a special medical and hospital protection plan. The Portland Federal Council, made up of the Portland heads of all Federal agencies, had a committee spend 2 years studying a

large number of plans presented by various companies. Finally the committee worked out with the National Hospital Association a special group insurance contract available only to the Federal employees and their families.

By negotiating through the Council's committee it was possible to get coverage when 400 employees signed up, with no minimum number required in any particular agency. A feature which permits premiums to be kept down while providing generous benefits is that the first \$10 expense due to each separate condition is deductible.

The Portland newspaper, "Oregonian" commended the Federal employees for working out their own program of health protection.

#### Income Tax Information

As in past years, information concerning salaries and wages paid employees of Public Roads has been reported to State and other taxing authorities by furnishing such authorities additional copies of Treasury Department Form W-2. In certain cases it is necessary to furnish income information for the same employee to more than one taxing authority such as, for example, where the place of employment and the employee's residence are within different taxing jurisdictions, or where tax is imposed by two or more overlapping jurisdictions such as a State and a city or a city and a school district. Also, for some States and Territories, income taxes now are withheld on a pay-as-you-go basis in the same manner as provided for Federal income tax.

The supplying of such information or the withholding of State taxes does not constitute an expression by the Federal Government as to the actual tax liability of any particular employee. Individual employees may have tax liabilities to more than one taxing jurisdiction. All employees are reminded, therefore, that it is their individual responsibility to comply with the requirements of their locality, to acquaint themselves with their local tax laws and regulations, and to discharge the obligations imposed.

#### Only in Texas

Lowell S. Coy, engineer for the Texas District Office believes in efficiency in his deer hunting. He recently bagged a 140-pound buck in the early morning within a half mile of the Austin city limits, and was back at the office at 9:00 a.m.

#### Foreign Assignees

HERMAN L. GAINES, District Engineer in Monrovia, Liberia, has been in Atlanta, Ga., for several weeks visiting with his family and friends.

THOMAS A. JONES, former District Engineer for Puerto Rico, who had been on temporary assignment representing the Bureau on the reopening of work on the Inter-American Highway in Guatemala, was transferred to that country to head the Bureau's office in Guatemala City. Mr. Jones, assigned to Puerto Rico in 1947, has been with the Bureau since 1919 except for a 7-year period (1939-46) when he was employed as Chief Engineer of the Department of Highways of the Republic of Nicaragua.

BERT A. GRANSTON, KENNETH C. SHEARER, WALTER R. WELCH, and CLARK W. ZURCHER returned to the United States after completing tours of duty in Ethiopia.

#### Foreign Visitors

The training of highway engineers from other countries continued during the past month when some 38 engineers were in the United States participating in programs arranged and directed by Public Roads. Included were 19 engineers from the Philippines, 6 from Thailand, 3 from Iran, 2 from Jordan, 2 from Formosa, and one each from Ecuador, Iraq, El Salvador, Uruguay, Pakistan, and Honduras.

All of these men were sponsored by the Foreign Operations Administration. Training programs included assignments with a number of State highway departments, Public Roads offices, and several manufacturers of highway construction and maintenance equipment.

#### Reporters Congratulated

James C. Worthy, former Assistant Secretary for Administration of the Department of Commerce, conveyed his congratulations to those contributing to The News in Public Roads. In a memorandum to the Commissioner, Mr. Worthy wrote as follows:

"An issue of The News in Public Roads has just been brought to my attention. I am delighted to see how effectively you have been able to get across to employees not only news of developments in the Bureau's work activities but also news in the field of personnel management of interest to all employees."

The Commissioner's reply was "Many employees contribute to The News. Your congratulations will be passed on to them."



## SICK BENEFITS

In the completion of the Income Tax Return (Form 1040) for 1954, employees for the first time may exclude from wages an amount received by them for sickness during 1954. The instructions concerning such exclusion are contained on page 6 of the publication entitled, "Helpful Information on How to Prepare Your Income Tax Return," supplied by the Office of Internal Revenue. These instructions require that a statement be furnished showing how the exclusion was computed.

It will not be necessary for payroll offices to furnish employees statements as to the amount of leave they used during the year, the total amount received, or their weekly rate of pay. This information, if needed by an employee for the purpose of claiming an exclusion from wages on account of sickness should be obtained as follows:

1. Where the employee is in doubt as to the amount and dates of leave used in 1954, he should consult the appropriate leave clerk who will furnish this information to him orally.

2. Inquiry may be made by the employee of his personnel office if he is in doubt as to the rate of his gross pay during a period of illness. The personnel office will advise the employee orally of his annual rate of pay, but all computations relating to the amount of the exclusion must be made by the employee.

In determining the weekly rate of pay, an employee should divide his per annum salary rate by 52. The daily rate may be derived by taking one-fifth of the weekly rate.

Employees should refrain from requesting information from payroll offices, and requests to time clerks and the personnel office should be kept to the minimum actually required by them in completing Form 1040.

## Nature Study

Things are not always routine and humdrum in highway location and construction work. This was demonstrated to George Thompson and George O'Neil, engineers in Division 15, while they were on reconnaissance work in the Everglades National Park.

One evening while returning from a long day in the rough terrain of that area, Thompson observed a movement in the grass close by his feet. Upon looking closely, he discovered two large snakes tied together in what appeared to be a

flat knot. The larger of the snakes was readily identified as an indigo about 7 or 8 feet long. The smaller one was a rat snake, which at first glance looked somewhat like a rattler. Actually the two snakes were engaged in deadly combat. The indigo soon had the other snake in his mouth and its body was coiled up but not about that of his unmoving victim. Presently, the indigo began to swallow the 2-or 3-foot rat snake by short snapping movements of its jaws. It uncoiled and straightened its own body slowly to accommodate the snake being swallowed. About the time that only the tip of the rat snake's tail was protruding from the indigo's mouth, the big snake appeared to notice the men and then suddenly disappeared.

Thompson and O'Neil left the scene with an unusual experience to relate about their work in the Everglades.

## In-Service Training

The Bureau's in-service training program for the fiscal year 1955 is scheduled as follows:

Aerial surveying on-the-job training, Wash., D. C., Feb. 14-May 13. L. T. Bartell, Division 7 Office, is taking 3 months' training.

Urban design and traffic control school, Portland, Oreg., Feb. 28-Mar. 4, for Bureau and State personnel in the area of Division 8.

Urban and geometric design school, Kansas City, Mo., Mar. 14-18, for Public Roads and State personnel in the area of Division 5.

Washington office operations course, Mar. 14-June 3, for 17 junior engineers who will complete the 3-year training program at the close of this session.

Urban and geometric design, University of Maryland regional school, Mar. 21-Apr. 1, for personnel from the State highway departments of Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and District of Columbia. Public Roads people will assist in conducting the lectures.

Materials conference, Denver, Colo., Apr. 4-8, for Division 9 and State personnel of that area.

Materials conference, Gravelly Point, Va., Apr. 25-May 6, for personnel from Division 3.

Training programs completed so far this year were as follows:

Urban and geometric design on-the-job training, Wash., D. C. C. S. Monnier and D. C. Brooks from the Division 4 Office and Kentucky District Office completed this special training.

Aerial surveying regional school, Boise, Idaho, for 33 Public Roads and State personnel.

Indoctrination course, Wash., D. C., for 20 junior engineers who graduated from colleges in 1954.

Administrative management course, Wash., D. C. for field office personnel.

## Library Request

The Archives of Public Roads are maintained both as a library collection and as a record of the Bureau's development. The Library is assembling a collection of all Bureau publications since its organization in 1893 as the Office of Road Inquiry. These publications are consulted frequently and may be borrowed by Bureau personnel. It is requested that four copies of all speeches, papers, reports, translations, and magazine articles prepared by Public Roads employees be sent to the Library for the archives collection.

## Use of Government Vehicles

OSCAR WIEDERHOLD of the Equipment, Procurement, and Traffic Branch is detailed for a period of 6 months to the Motor Equipment Division of General Services Administration which is making a survey of motor vehicle use by various government agencies in the metropolitan area of Washington.

This survey, instituted by Public Law 766 and Executive Order 10579, is being made by GSA to determine the economic possibilities of pooling all government vehicles, including military, used for administrative purposes. Similar surveys are being made in San Francisco, New York, and Chicago, and will be continued in other cities.

## Secondary Road Plan

In addition to the 17 States enumerated in the December issue of The News as being approved to operate under the secondary road plan, 9 more have been added as of February 1. They are as follows: California, Illinois, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New York, South Dakota, Vermont, and Virginia.

## Highway Conferences

Bureau employees participating in the Maine Fifth Annual Highway Conference held in Orono, Me., December 17-18, were Joseph Barnett, Assistant Deputy Commissioner, Division of Engineering; C. E. Swain, Division Engineer for Division 1; and Ray E. Pomeroy, Jr., Programing and Planning Engineer for the Maine District Office. Several prominent State highway officials from the Northeastern States spoke on subjects relating to urban problems.

## LIFE IN THE PHILIPPINES

Public Roads has 16 men assigned to the Philippine Division at present. Of those assigned, six have had previous tours of duty in the Philippines, eight were formerly assigned to other Public Roads foreign activities, and only two are on their first tour of duty overseas with the Bureau.

Manila is probably one of the best foreign assignments. Filipinos are cooperative, hospitable, and friendly. About 85 percent of them speak English. There is a large American and European group in Manila, and even in the provinces some Americans are to be found. The climate is hot during March, April, and May but temperatures seldom exceed 95 degrees. December, January, and February are delightful and during the remainder of the year, the rains bring relief from the heat. Nights are generally cool. The American School offers children of U. S. nationals all the advantages of a stateside education except football. Golf, tennis, swimming, and social activities are engaged in at the several clubs.

In the field, conditions are spotty. In some towns there are good hotels and good food, in others the accommodations are meager. The development projects are, for the most part, in remote areas where the engineers have to walk through the jungle and carry their food. Malaria is disappearing under the F.O.A. spraying program. Fungus, leeches, and other irritants remain, however. Care must be exercised to avoid amoebic dysentery.

Normally, travel is performed between islands by air; there are over 7,000 of them, the largest of which is about the size of Pennsylvania. The only railroad of any importance is on Luzon Island, but it is practically bankrupt and service is something less than desirable. Farm products are usually shipped by a combination of highway and water routes. The high cost of living and the low income of farm families in the Philippines can be attributed in no small degree to the excessive cost of transportation of goods. The present development and betterment program of the highway system is designed to correct this situation insofar as highways are concerned.

## Circulating Letter

The Junior Engineer Class of 1951 has maintained contact among its 19 members by circulating a

"cumulative" letter. As the circulating letter completes a cycle, the recipient substitutes a new letter for the succeeding cycle. In this manner, the class "visits" at least twice each year. This scheme was inaugurated by Don Trull of the Nebraska District Office.

## New Record

Record breaking progress was made in each of the various steps of Federal-aid project advancement during the calendar year 1954. The dollar value of accomplishments ranged from \$562 million of Federal-aid payments to States to \$777 million for programs approval. Plans approved totaled \$685 million, contracts awarded totaled \$658 million, and construction put in place totaled \$600 million in Federal-aid funds.

## Needs Study

Early last year the Michigan State Legislature established a Highway Study Committee to re-examine Michigan's highway needs and to prepare a plan for providing adequate highway road and street facilities for the people of the State.

The committee made formal request to the Automotive Safety Foundation to undertake direction of the engineering phase of the study, and also requested that the study be established as a Federal-aid highway planning survey project. S. F. Coffman, former division 4 programing and planning engineer, is directing the work for the A.S.F. It is estimated that 300 engineers will be engaged in the work including personnel from Public Roads, the State Highway Department, the County Road Association, and the Michigan Municipal League.

## Roads of the Past

Wheel ruts made in 1850-70 on the old Santa Fe Trail are still clearly visible along a Federal-aid secondary route in New Mexico.

Fort Union National Monument, authorized recently by Congressional action, was an important U. S. Army post along the Santa Fe Trail in the last half of the 19th century. It is located about 7 miles west of U.S. 85 near Watrous, N. M. The National Park Service and State Highway Department have agreed on a location and design for a road leading from U.S. 85 to the Monument.

Random wheel ruts of a hundred or more years ago will control the location of the new road. Preservation and visibility of old trail

marks are prime requirements of construction in this historic area.

Since restoration work at the Monument site is contingent upon a satisfactory access road, construction of a secondary project on this route may be anticipated in the near future.

## CREDIT UNION

Public Roads employees in the Washington area with a financial problem, either too much money or too little, might well explore the possibilities of our credit union.

The credit union, dating from November 1940, was organized to promote thrift through a convenient savings plan and to provide a place to obtain necessary loans with a minimum of red tape and at a low interest cost. Twentyfive employees became charter members, 14 of whom are still active. In the 14 years of its operation, the credit union has loaned nearly one-half million dollars and its membership has grown to 446.

Membership is available to any Bureau employee in the Washington area simply by depositing a minimum of \$5 plus a 25-cent membership fee. The Washington area includes Division 15 headquarters and the Gravelly Point and Langley Research Stations. Loans may be arranged for members of good credit standing to finance emergencies such as doctor and hospital bills, purchases of equipment, home repairs, funeral expenses, consolidation of debts, etc. Loans are not made for the purchase of homes and automobiles.

Interest on loans is paid along with the biweekly or monthly installments and is calculated at 3/4 of one percent on the unpaid balance. It is possible for members to borrow up to \$400 without co-signers or other security. Interest on savings is paid in the form of annual dividends, which for the past 3 years has averaged 3 1/2 percent.

The credit union is under the general supervision of the Bureau of Federal Credit Unions of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. It is internally supervised and operated by a seven-member board of directors, a five-member credit committee, and a three-member supervisory committee. Members of these committees are elected from among the shareholders of the credit union at the annual meetings.

Any inquiries regarding credit union matters should be directed to the Office of the Treasurer, located in Room 1107. This office is open each payday from 1 to 4 p.m.



**Assignments**—Con. from p.1  
training. They had been on special assignment in the beetle-infested territory of the West.

TERRILL M. CREEKMORE, LAFAYETTE GANN, ZELBERT D. HILL, WILLIAM H. NEWELL, CHARLES B. THOMAS, JR., WILLIS O. NEWTON, and SHARKEY E. KEALHOFER recently joined the engineering force of Division 15. They were assigned as follows: Mr. Gann, Eupora, Miss.; Mr. Thomas, Florence, Ala.; and the remaining employees, Kosciusko, Miss.

H. L. FRIEL and C. E. LARSON are temporarily handling the construction and maintenance functions of Division 2 following the retirement of A. E. McClure.

E. C. GRANLEY and W. N. RECORDS returned to the Washington Office after 6 months in the field on unit cost studies of grading and paving work. Mr. Records was in the Crow Indian Reservation of Montana and Mr. Granley divided his time between there and Colfax, Wash. Both men reported that dust encountered last summer was the worst ever experienced.

WM. L. HALL, transportation economist, returned to duty in Division 8 to assist the division programing and planning engineer, after approximately one year's separation in private employment.

WALTER G. HANSEN and JOHN E. MORS, junior engineers, were assigned to the California District Office for Federal-aid training.

FRANCIS HORTON of the Maine District Office has been on detached service with the Federal Civilian Defense Administration in Augusta since November, assisting with the processing of claims covering hurricane damage to local roads and bridges.

D. R. JACOBSEN, J. G. OHRN, D. W. GATES, D. W. KRAUSS, and H. M. SCHMITT, junior engineers, are currently working on forest and park assignments in Montana.

FRED D. JEROME, engineer for the North Carolina District Office, was appointed head of the Construction Section. Mr. Jerome came to the Bureau in 1935, following employment with the North Carolina and Louisiana highway departments.

ARCHIE J. KING, JESSE L. LEMAY, and JAMES T. LICH were assigned recently to the Gatlinburg, Tenn., District of Division 15.

FRANK W. KRON was recently promoted to supervising highway design engineer for the New Jersey District Office.

ROY E. LEDNICKY, engineer in the Oregon District Office, transferred to the Division 8 Office, Forest Highway Section.

RUDOLF M. LEMKE, junior engineer, completed his training in the Arkansas District in December and then reported to the Division 6 Office for a 2-week training period. He has been assigned temporarily to the Arkansas District Office.

SAM J. MARSH transferred from the District Office of Division 15 at Hot Springs, Ark., to the sub-office at Ozark, Mo. He will supervise the construction of a grading project as well as furnish technical assistance to the other project engineers in that area.

JOHN W. MUELLER was assigned to the Colorado District Office in December as programing and planning engineer. Mr. Mueller was formerly assistant programing and planning engineer in Division 9, and assistant construction engineer, Seward District, Alaska.

GERALD T. O'BRIEN and CLARENCE L. SANDERS were appointed as engineering aids for the Arkansas District of Division 15, and assigned to forest highway work in Missouri.

THOMAS E. PRIEST was appointed administrative manager of the Colorado District Office in December. Prior assignments include field auditor in Division 9, chief accountant in Juneau, Alaska, and administrative manager in the Illinois District Office.

HOWARD O. RUFENACHT was recently appointed administrative manager for the Nebraska District Office. Mr. Rufenacht transferred from the Division Office in Kansas City.

DOUGLAS E. SCHNEIBLE, former employee of the Hydraulic Research Branch and stationed at Kansas City, transferred to Atlanta to become hydraulic engineer for Division 3.

W. H. STANHAGEN AND SHELDON TURNIDGE, junior engineers, were assigned to the Arizona District Office for Federal-aid training.

Mesdames EDNA STREB and LUCY KELLOG, former employees of the Office of Internal Revenue and the Weather Bureau, have been temporarily assigned to the Illinois District Office.

DANIEL WATT, junior engineer, completed his training assignment in the Oklahoma District Office and has moved to the Texas District for the next phase in Federal-aid field operations.

ROBERT G. S. YOUNG was assigned to the Oklahoma District following his training at the Louisiana District Office.

JEAN WEAVER, clerk-stenographer, and CARL BENN, DANA BARTLETT, and THOMAS KEISER, engineering aids, were assigned recently to the Bar Harbor District of Division 15.

## North Dakota Initiates Training

The North Dakota District Office has initiated a training program for its engineers. The first course which began on January 3 is devoted to the discussion of the 1954 AASHO publication "A Policy on Geometric Design of Rural Highways." An engineer acts as instructor for each session and is responsible for the presentation of one chapter of the publication.

## Charitable Solicitations

The Commerce Combined Charities Campaign in Washington was conducted to reduce the persistent pressures on employees for contributions to various organizations throughout the year. Employees were assured that no other Department-wide collections would be made. This policy was reaffirmed in a Department memorandum of December 17.

Solicitors from fund collecting agencies are not to be allowed to seek contributions from employees in the Department's offices. Public Roads employees in the Washington area are advised not to contribute to any special solicitation that may be undertaken by error.

The American Red Cross was included in the Commerce Combined Charities Campaign. The Secretary, as Chairman of the Government Unit, will therefore be able to make the required donation from the Department without further solicitation.

Red Cross membership cards are being made available to the Campaign Directors of the various bureaus for issuance to employees who donated to the Red Cross through the Combined Charities Campaign. Employees who left their donations undesignated also are eligible to receive cards if they so desire.

## The News in PUBLIC ROADS

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