

THE AMERICAN LEGION

(Copy for This Department Supplied by the American Legion News Service.)

FINDS JOBS FOR LEGION MEN

Minnesota Department Commander Holds Remarkable Record as Soldier, Citizen and Legionnaire.

Dr. A. A. VanDyke, Minneapolis, Minn., newly elected commander of the Minnesota Department of the American Legion, is accredited, among other things, with having found jobs for 1,300 ex-service men. The new commander has a remarkable record as a soldier, citizen and legionnaire.



When the American Legion came into being, Dr. VanDyke immediately became an active member. He was the first vice commander of St. Paul Post No. 8, which at the time was the largest post in the United States. He has served as chairman of the Ramsey county welfare committee and was a member of the legislative committee instrumental in getting the soldiers' bonus bill before the legislature.

Doctor VanDyke was born in Alexandria, Minn., and was graduated in 1903 from the University of Chicago School of Medicine. He later completed a course in dentistry at University of Minnesota. During the war he enlisted in the signal corps and because of previous training in artillery was sent to the M. O. R. S. camp in New Jersey as instructor.

THE DISABLED ARE FAVORED

Director of the Government Veterans Bureau Aims to Give the Doubt to Claimants.

Gen. Red Tape, merciless foe of the disabled man, has been almost entirely eliminated through efforts of the American Legion, in its successful campaign for the passage of the Sweet bill—and the efforts of Charles R. Forbes, director of the government veterans' bureau.



Himself a veteran and a Legionnaire, Mr. Forbes has adopted a policy of seeking out the disabled man, instead of letting the disabled man's claim find its way into a pigeon hole via the route of red tape.

The government put an end to divided authority in its dealing with ex-service men with the appointment of Mr. Forbes as head of the veterans' bureau. This bureau dispenses the insurance, looks after hospital care and the difficult task of restoring disabled men to their former earning capacity, or creating them anew through vocational training.

Mr. Forbes' policy in dealing with compensation claims of disabled men and women gives the doubt to the claimant. "No claim," says Mr. Forbes, "shall be disallowed unless the disallowance is imperative, and doubts are to be decided in favor of the disabled man or woman."

HOW TO CURE UNEMPLOYMENT

Secretary of Labor, Writing in Legion Weekly, Tells How Situation May Be Relieved.

Writing in the American Legion Weekly on "Seeking the Cure for Unemployment," James J. Davis, secretary of labor, sums up the cure in a single paragraph as follows:

"Wage earners can help by giving up unreasonable demands, so that employers can afford to start their mills again, or so that buildings can be built—houses, schools, factories, stores. Merchants can help by giving up unreasonable profits, so that more people can afford to buy clothing, furniture, food and general supplies. The landlord can help by lowering unreasonable rents, so that workmen can afford to accept a wage that shall become a living wage as rents are lowered."

Warm Welcome for "Legion" Steamer.

After having clipped ten hours off the record run between New York and Rio de Janeiro, the all-American-manned steamer American Legion, has returned to New York, following her maiden voyage. The vessel, with the majority of its crew members of the Legion, was greeted in every South American port it touched by Legion posts. Along the Platte river from Montevideo to Buenos Ayres, the captain reported, launches put out from shore and their owners, cracked bottles of wine and champagne over the bow plates of the ship as she slowly made her way up the river. This, he said, was the South American Legionnaires' way of expressing their welcome.

WOMAN SAVED BY LEGION MAN

Mississippi Lieutenant Awarded French Medal of Honor and Life Saving Emblem.

A woman caught in a jam of civilians fleeing a town in the war zone of France was forced over the parapet of a bridge, falling into a stream 70 feet below. Several French officers looked on in horror, but a young American officer without hesitation leaped after the submerged woman, bringing her to the surface and safely landing her on the shore.



The hero was George A. Dunagin who at the time was a lieutenant in the liaison service of the United States army. For his bravery he was awarded the French medal of honor and the Congressional life saving medal.

Today, Dunagin is in charge of the Shreveport (La.) sub-station of the United States Veteran's bureau in Paris and London, and was assigned by the American Legion to assist General Dawes in the investigation of the needs of disabled ex-service men.

Dunagin was born at Laurel, Miss., and was educated at the Mississippi A. & M. College. His military service, which, after an injury sustained in a machine gun accident, was in the diplomatic corps, took him to seventeen European countries.

"LEGIONNAIRE" NAME OF TOWN

Arkansas Doughboys Settle on Adjoining Tracts in Oklahoma and Form 2,500-Acre Colony.

They are beating their swords into plowshares in the biblical way of saying that veterans of the World war are going back to the farm.

In Arkansas, on a 2,500-acre tract, a "colony" of sixteen former service men descended from Tulsa, Okla., and settled on adjoining quarter-sections of land. All of them were members of the Joe Carson post of the American Legion and they plan to establish a trading center and town under the name "Legionaire."

The doughboy colony is in Scott county. Most of the settlers will be able to call the land their own in seven months as the state allows two years of war service to count on the residence requirement.

Some of the men will spend the winter on their land, clearing timber, building, hunting and trapping. It is estimated that 100 service men of Tulsa ultimately will settle on government land.

WAR WORKER AIDS JOBLESS

Entertainer During Conflict Enlists to Help Unemployed Ex-Service Men in New York.

Miss Ellerbe Wood will be remembered by many ex-service men for her work as an entertainer of the Y. M. C. A. corps in France. With her own troupe of young women she spent a year "bearing the doughboys in the overseas camps. Her service, however, did not end with the war. She has enlisted to help the unemployed ex-service men in New York.

When "The Man Without a Country," the film-version of Edward Everett Hale's historical story, was shown in New York under auspices of the American Legion, Miss Wood volunteered her services, and at each performance read the preamble to the constitution of the Legion and gave a patriotic reading. The proceeds from the show were used in the welfare work among jobless ex-service men.

MAKES CITIZENS OF ALIENS

Americanization Committee of Montana Post Successful in Preparing Applicants for Naturalization.

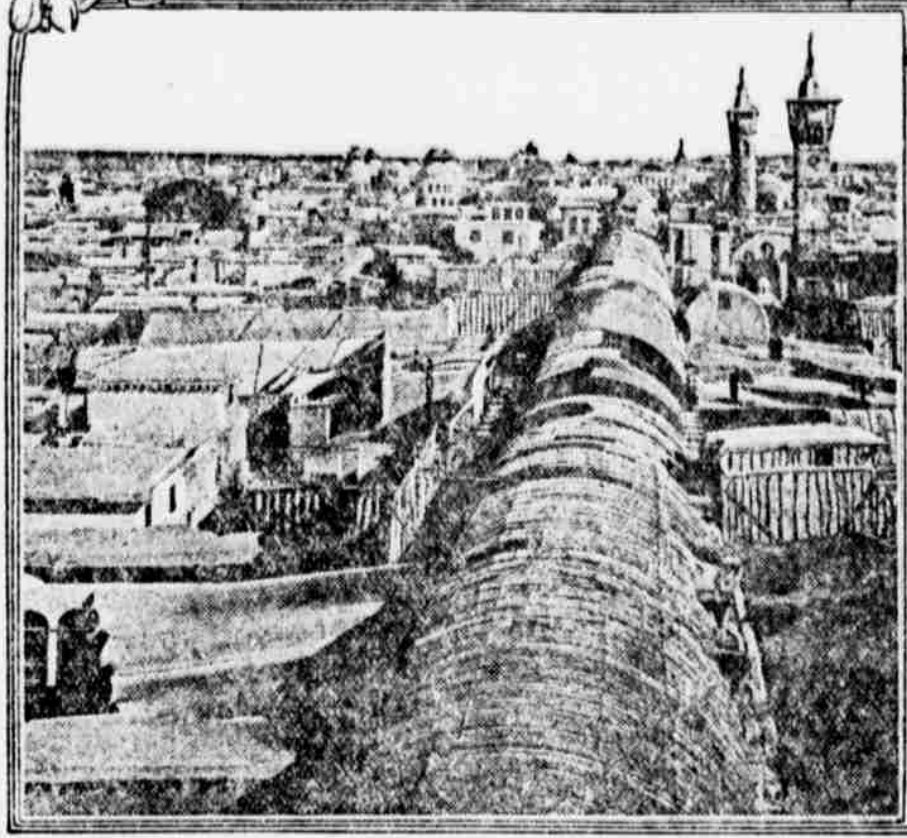
Training aliens for citizenship has been successfully carried out by the Americanization committee of the Great Falls, (Mont.) post of the American Legion. A class of 87 aliens has just finished preparation for naturalization under direction of the Legion committee, and 37 of them were admitted to citizenship. This was an unusually high percentage, according to the naturalization officer.

Another class of 100 foreigners is now in training for the citizenship test. They receive instructions from the Legion committee twice a week. Following the course of instruction they are subjected to preliminary examinations to determine their fitness for citizenship.

Many Graves are Unmarked.

Because of a shortage of government grave-markers and the failure of congress to appropriate funds for their purchase, the graves of thousands of Americans killed overseas are unmarked in this country, according to a report of the American Legion, filed at Washington. The Legion's legislative committee will petition the congress to set aside sufficient funds to allow the purchase of a marker for each grave, as required by law.

OLDEST LIVING CITY



Roof of the "Straight" Street in Damascus.

(Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)

When France obtained the mandate for Syria after the World war, she fell heir to what is reputed to be the oldest "living" city in the world—Damascus. Nearly 4,000 years ago the writer of Genesis mentioned this old city, and spoke of it as a place of note. It existed when the Pharaohs ruled over Egypt; it probably saw Babylon rise, and certainly it saw that proud city fall. And it has lived as other world-famous places about it have passed into oblivion or lost their glory: Memphis, Thebes, Nineveh, Sardis, Tyre, Sidon, Jerusalem, Susa, Ephesus—a long procession of mighty cities.

Situated at the head of Arabia, near the east end of the Mediterranean and on the land route between Egypt and the rest of Africa on one hand, and Asia and Europe on the other, Damascus occupied a position in which it could not avoid importance. With the establishment of Mohammedanism, it took on increased importance as the assembling point for the final long crossing of the desert sands to holy Mecca. And when it is added that the city is encompassed by a fertile plain through which flows an abundance of water, its early consequence, its vitality and its long life can easily be understood. It is set in the oasis of oases, a grove more than 50 miles in extent of nut and fruit trees interspersed with gardens of vegetables. No wonder the Bedouins from the sandy stretches of Arabia and Syria called it "the pearl of the desert!"

In recent times Damascus was the second city in Turkey, being surpassed in size and importance only by Constantinople. Now Aleppo, also in old Turkish territory, and since the war, a part, too, of French Syria, has about overtaken Damascus in size. But Damascus' hoary traditions will long give it first place in the hearts of the East.

Fascination of Its Streets.

Damascus is the rendezvous of peoples from all parts of the Mohammedan world. One cannot be long on its streets without being interested in the motley crowd of humanity that swarms through them, and, in spite of creed and nationality, manage to keep sweet tempered. The urban Damascusene rubs against the swarthy, sun-burnt son of the desert without even a word of scorn or anger; the Mohammedan shoulders the Jew as if they were brothers in the faith; the spotless visitor from the Occident jostles the not-any-too-clean peasant from the surrounding villages, while Persians, Moors, Afghans, Indians, Egyptians, Sudanese, and others from many parts of the globe hurry along, all intent on something of importance that has brought them to this metropolis of the Orient.

On the streets are to be seen vendors of almost everything under the sun, especially in the way of eatables, and, to those who are familiar with the value of the goods offered for sale, the words of the native visitor are plain when he informs you that "in Damascus you can sup or breakfast for nothing," because of the little cost of food.

On the same street, within a few yards of each other, may be seen the vendor of cucumbers with his wares fresh from the garden, exposed on a donkey's back (when the load was sold in pre-war days, it brought between 20 and 30 cents); the bread seller with his warm cakes of bread on a tray resting on a stand ready to supply the hungry with a good-sized loaf for a cent, and the vendor of milk, who for another cent will give you a large basin of sweetened milk in which to soak your loaf. At different seasons you may fare well at little cost of melons, grapes, apricots, plums, peaches, apples, oranges, figs, etc., all the products of the gardens and orchards around the city.

All Due to the River Barada.

But some will ask whence comes all this abundance, for in no other part of Syria or Palestine is there such a profusion of fruit and vegetables at such low prices. The cause is the

abundant water supply provided by the ever-flowing and life-producing river Barada, the Abana of the Bible.

Rising some miles northwest of the city, the river is conducted to all parts of Damascus through thousands of channels. It is also tapped to irrigate the gardens, orchards, and fields outside the city that are constantly under cultivation to supply the needs of the inhabitants.

There are many pleasant spots by the river's side, whither the Damascusene resort after the work and business of the day to pass an hour over the coffee cup or the ever-acceptable water pipe as they talk over the news of the day or the doings of the outer world as revealed to them through the Arabic or Turkish papers.

Would you investigate closer some of the most primitive and interesting doings of the Damascusene, turn aside to the place where the famous Damascus curtains are made, and there in semidarkness you will find dozens of lads and men engaged in weaving these requisites of the home on the most primitive of looms, and yet they are able to produce an article that will compete with anything from the most complete and up-to-date factory in Europe.

Or, would you see how thousands of bushels of flour and measures of oil are produced, you have only to turn aside into one of the many mills to see that instead of steam the patient camel is used to turn the mill whose stones crush the grain or bruise the berries or seeds from which different oils are extracted. Some will say, primitive, indeed; but the Damascusene's reply would be that it is effective and inexpensive; and, where time is of little object, these are important items.

Views From a Minaret.

But the sights of Damascus are not all on the streets. For a good view of the city itself one must get the favor of a minaret keeper, and have his permission to climb to the gallery of the minaret and from there look out over the roofs, courts, towers, and streets of the city below. Be it said to the credit of the Damascusene that, although he is a faithful follower of the "desert prophet," the fanaticism so often exhibited by Mohammedans is absent in him.

An interesting outlook of the city is obtained from a minaret near the west end of "the street called Straight." From this position one immediately appreciates how well that ancient thoroughfare deserves its name, for it runs in a direct line across the city from west to east for about one and a half miles. This street, which is roofed in, still bears the same name as in the days of the Apostle Paul.

The principal attraction of the city is the great mosque, which is located in the heart of the busy capital and can only be reached through one of its many populous streets. This spacious resort for worship was rebuilt, early in the Twentieth century, the funds being contributed from all parts of the Moslem world, for in 1893 the edifice had been almost entirely destroyed by fire.

The mosque has had a varied experience, being at one time a heathen temple, then a Christian church, then held jointly by the Mohammedans and Christians and used as church and mosque at the same time; but since the Eighth century the Mohammedans have had the sole use of it for their own purposes.

In the mosque is the reputed tomb of John the Baptist's head, a shrine respected alike by Mohammedans and Christians. The local tradition says that after the execution of the Messiah's forerunner his head was sent to Damascus, then the capital of the district over which Herod had jurisdiction, so that his superior officer might see that the deed had really been done and one supposed inciter to rebellion disposed of. When the Saracen conqueror Khalid captured Damascus and was searching the church for treasure, he came across this revered relic and caused it to be interred and covered by a fine structure.

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