

2 Omaha Boys in Eng. Battalion in Italy Receiving Commendation

by S-Sgt. Julius C. Thomas

With the AAF Engineer Command in Italy—Just a year ago a battalion of Negro aviation engineers departed at an Italian port. To its members it was the beginning of the adventure of war. They well knew their mission—to construct and maintain airfields. But they did not know the myriad related duties they would have to perform to keep the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces on the wing.

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Two Omaha boys, Pvt. Richard Gibson, 2212 Charles Street, and T-5 Raymond E. Coleman, 2808 Miami St., both serve with the above outfit.

The first assignment came immediately following the landing. One company was sent to a base soon to be enlarged by them into one of the most important bomber fields in Italy. Another company learned that this is not just an American war when they were located at a Royal Air Force base needing reconditioning. The balance of the unit started repairs on hangar and building installations at one of the large Nazi-abandoned airfields.

If they had expected glamor and excitement they were disappointed for it was hard, unromantic work.

mining dirt, eating dust, battling mud. But when, ahead of schedule their individual assignments were completed and they saw mighty bombers roar down the runways they had built, they realized the significant role they had been chosen to play.

Maturing with successive assignments, the unit later proved itself in the face of emergency. Heavy rain coupled with a sudden snow storm wrecked the steel mat surface of an important 15th Air Force base. It was in the midst of an all out aerial offensive and every base was needed.

Organizing into 17 hour shifts, they worked around the clock, rolling back the steel mat piece by piece, and compacting the earth underneath as they went with the addition of fresh earth and sand. By the time 600 truckloads of sand had been added to the sub-surface the job was completed and the field was once again operational. Only a few days had been lost.

A personal inspection by Major General Nathan F. Twining, commanding the 15th Army Air Force, brought the unit a commendation.

Garment Workers Pres. Dubinsky, Backs FEPC.

New York, N. Y., March 15, 1945. It was announced by A. Phillip Randolph, Co-Chairman of the Nat-

ional Council for a Permanent FEPC that David Dubinsky, President International Ladies Garment Workers Union which is composed of Jewish Italian and Negro workers has supported the fight for the Bills in Congress, S 101 and H. R. 3222 for a permanent FEPC financially and morally from the very beginning of the effort to get an FEPC law passed. Brother Dubinsky did not only have the Union contribute five thousand dollars to the National Council for a Permanent FEPC last year but has given of his time in attending conferences and developing plans to put over this important bread and butter measure for the minorities of which the Negro people are the largest in the country.

21st Special Battalion Seabees Send \$3,136 To the NAACP.

New York—The largest check ever received from a naval group was sent into the national office NAACP from the 21st Special Construction Battalion in the amount of \$3,136. The memberships were the result of a campaign directed by L. D. Brown, Y2-c, chairman, and his assistants Walter Hightower, Jr., Y2-c; P. J. Key, MAM 2c and S. O. Allen, BM 2c. Especially creditable is the report

that the Battalion is "one of the few with mixed personnel and has never had any serious racial disturbances." It boasts also more Negro personnel than any other Special Battalion. The entire recreational set-up including operation of a movie theatre is managed and run by Negro enlisted men. These achievements are attributed mainly to the fairness of the commanding officers, Lt. Commander F. M. Poole, and Lt. D. W. Johnson, executive officer.

Facts about the men who brought in 547 new NAACP memberships is as follows: L. D. Brown, Y2c, a native of St. Petersburg, Florida, was formerly Civilian occupation school teacher at IGbbs High School, assistant director of the NAACP Youth Council and is now besides an assistant to the Chaplain, a teacher in the Armed Forces Institute, 21st Special Bn.

Walter Hightower, Jr., Education yeoman 3c, is a native of Henderson, Texas, and a former student of Bishop College; P. J. Key MAM, 2c, Bn, mail clerk, is from Coraopolis, Penn., is a former mail carrier and an active NAACP member; S. O. Allen BM 2c, Bn, master-at-arms, lived formerly in Savannah, Georgia.

LAST RITES HELD FOR MRS. GORDON

Succumbed Before She Could Get Back Home

Funeral services were held for Mrs. Nora Mary Gordon, 65, of 2922 North 28th Street, Thursday afternoon from Pilgrim Baptist Church, with burial in Forest Lawn.

Surrounded by many beautiful floral pieces, showing the respect and admiration for her, held by her neighbors and many friends, the body laid in state at her home, Wednesday until the funeral hour.

Mrs. Gordon died Friday afternoon at the Union Station just shortly after she had been assisted off the train on her return home from a visit in Wynne, Arkansas. She is survived by her husband, John; daughters, Johnnie, Mrs. Thea's Wiley, Mrs. Lummie Jones, Mrs. Ida Wiley; son, Booker; sisters, Mrs. Lily B. Stewart, all of Omaha and one sister, Mrs. Sarah Hobbs, Colt, Ark.; brothers, Johnny Nunn, Gary Ind., and Archie Nunn of Colt, Ark. and grandchild, Mrs. Mildred Dilard of Omaha.

Myers funeral home was in charge.

THE LIVING SOUTH

(BY HAROLD PREECE)
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MR. HAROLD PREECE

Three Noble Senators

During 34 years of nip and-tuck down here in Dixie, I've run around with a lot of folks. Most of 'em were good folks and it is because of them that I write this column every week.

I've run with Saints and I've run with sinners. But nobody ever saw me gallivanting around with the South's senators.

Whenever I've met a Southern senator—whether he held his seat in the state legislature at Atlanta or Austin or in the congress up in Washington—I've gone over to the window and opened it up for a little breeze.

Nebraska Power Co. Stockholders Hold Annual Meeting

RELECT 15 MEMBERS TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR COMING YEAR

Omaha, Nebraska, April 3—At the annual meeting of the stockholders of Nebraska Power Company held in Augusta, Maine, yesterday, the fifteen members of the Board of Directors were elected to serve for the coming year. Th company, a Maine corporation, was sold last December 26 to Omaha Electric Committee, Inc., a non-profit corporation chartered in Nebraska.

Three out-state Nebraskans, and two Augusta men were elected. Omahans chosen are: J. E. Davidson, who is president of the company; T. H. Maenner, insurance broker and present board chairman; Gerald Collins, South Omaha Lawyer; State Senator Sidney J. Cullingham, real estate broker; Gould Dietz, retired; Dennis Radford, Jr., State agent for Lincoln National Life Insurance Company; and W. C. Fraser, W. W. Wenstrand, Bernard Stone and Edward F. Leary, Omaha attorneys.

Out-state members are Emil E. Wolf, North Bend Banker; Dr. B. H. Baer of Ashland, and Reed O. Hanlon, State Commander of the American Legion.

Also elected were Ernest L. McLean and George H. Hunt, Augusta lawyers.

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the fresh air. Well, brothers, I want to tell the congregation that I've been a sinner for thinking that ever Senator got hatched out of the same rotten egg. I reckon that I fell into the error of judging every Southern Senator by Bilbo as my Negro fellow-Southerners sometimes fall into the error of judging every white man by the riding boss.

I want to introduce to my fellow-Southerners three senators whom the whole South can feel mighty proud of. In this day when Dixie hears the shots fired on the Rhine and turns its face toward democracy, they are speeding up democracy by fighting for right of black Southerners to vote.

SENATOR SPEARS

I want you to meet Senator J. Franklin Spears of San Antonio, Texas who is not only sponsoring a bill to outlaw discrimination against the brown-skinned Mexican Americans numbering one-sixth of the state's population, but who is leading the fight in the state legislature to prevent passage of a measure which would get around the U. S. Supreme Court decision permitting Negroes to vote in the Democratic primaries.

The words that Senator Spears spoke on the floor of the Texas Senate will be heard over Dixie as long as the shots that were fired at Bunker Hill were heard all over the world:

"The question of Negroes voting has been pretty well settled. I have no objection to Negroes voting."

Later on, I understand, Senator Spears was heard to say that "Negroes walk around on two feet, and paid two taxes like every body else. Therefore, they ought to vote like everybody else."

SENATOR ROGERS

Next I want you to meet Senator Woodville Rogers who also comes from San Antonio but who used to pick cotton with my mother when they were kids growing up in the North Texas Blackland. Dixie fash ion, we still call Woodville Rogers "senator" although he is no longer a member of the legislature but is serving as chairman of the legislative division of the Democratic state committee.

"The only way to disfranchise the Negro is to fight the Civil War all over again," so Woodville Rogers told a newspaperman in Austin last week. And Woodville Rogers has been faithful to democracy in Dixie—by leaving his law practice to come down to Austin and lobby against the "billy-white" vote bill.

SENATOR MCGINTY

Last but not least, meet State Senator J. Roy McGinty of Calhoun, Georgia, who co-authored the bill that repealed Georgia's poll tax just a few weeks ago. Speaking for the right of Negroes to vote in the primaries, McGinty is recorded by Norfolk Journal and Guide Columnist Albert Hinton as saying:

"It is neither justice nor democracy to require of the Negro all the obligations of citizenship and deny him the rights of citizenship."

Pretty soon, all of us are going to be exercising all the rights as well as all the obligation of citizenship.

enough. And let Bilbo mark this well: that men like him are going to stop down and men like these three are going to step up.

NEGRO ARCHITECT WINS FIRST PRIZE IN NATION WIDE CONTEST

by Verma Arvey
 (Exclusive!) Hollywood, (Calvin News Service). First prize in a nation-wide competition for the Practical Miracle Post-War Home has gone to Ralph Vaughn, young colored architect who is now a senior set designer at MGM studios in Culver City, California.

The contest was held by THE PRACTICAL BUILDER, a trade journal published in Chicago for contractors, realtors and so on, and the first prize amounted to one hundred dollars, an article about Mr. Vaughn appeared in the February issue of the magazine. For this contest, Mr. Vaughn simply sent in photographs of the home he designed and built for himself and his family, along with sketches of what he intends to do to it after the war is over. This home is located at 2171 West 26th Place, in Los Angeles.

Immediately after the announcement of that prize, Mr. Vaughn won honorable mention in a nation-wide competition held by the Colotype Company (in Seattle) for a glamorous and yet practical bathroom. Ralph Vaughn came to Los Angeles from Washington, D.C., and was for a time associated with Paul R. Williams, architect of established reputation. Later, he began his work at the Culver City film studios, and while there has designed the tallest building on the MGM lot, and the longest scenic backing ever made at MGM.

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ASKS A QUESTION

On the Omaha Power Controversy

Why Should L. B. 204 Be Repealed?

1. L.B. 204 never has had its constitutionality tested in the courts. Naturally, bankers would hesitate to buy bonds of a public power district established under a law whose constitutionality has not been tested. A decision from the courts may not come for years. *That delay is costing you, the users of electricity, over Two Million Dollars every year.*
2. Under L.B. 204, the Peoples Power Commission, with the exception of two members, is appointed by the Mayor and City Council. *That leaves the possibility that the Power Company may always be a political football for city politicians.* Under S.F. 310, the General Public Power Law, directors of the power district are chosen by a vote of the people, as soon as the terms of the first directors expire.
3. L.B. 204 has failed in the past to give us public ownership. The Peoples Power Commission, created under L.B. 204, was unsuccessful in its attempts to negotiate the purchase of Nebraska Power Company for the purpose of turning it into a public power district. *Since it has already proved unsuccessful, why try to proceed under it further when delay is so costly?*
4. Repeal of L.B. 204 and procedure under S.F. 310, the General Public Power Law, would permit all of the State of Nebraska, including Omaha, to operate under the same law. Why must Omaha be forced to proceed under special legislation when our problem of generating electric power is not much different from that of the rest of the state? Let's repeal L.B. 204 and proceed under S.F. 310, which has been found to be constitutional.
5. L.B. 204 absolutely prevents public ownership under any other plan. Since L.B. 204 has failed in the past, *let's repeal it so public ownership can proceed under a workable plan.*

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