

Government to Move D. C. Floating Hotel To North Carolina

Takes Over Amphitrite To House Employees Of Airplane Plant

Brought here some three months ago to house District war workers, the Amphitrite, America's only floating hotel, has been "taken over" by the Government for use by workers in North Carolina, still untouched by Washingtonians, it was learned yesterday.

The War Shipping Board requisitioned the floating hotel Friday, it was learned, to house workers of the Consolidated Aircraft Corp. in Elizabeth City, N. C.

H. G. Bulkley, head of the Amphitrite Corp., owners of the seagoing hotel, said to the Federal Government "just took it."

"I don't know what they are going to do with it. I only know they just took it. They said it was done under the War Act."

To expedite the chartering of the ship by the War Shipping Board and its subsequent use by the aircraft corporation, the Navy stepped in, but spokesmen emphasized this was the Navy's only connection with the move.

Did Not Meet Fire Rules.

The floating hotel had as yet not been opened for business because it had not complied with fire and other regulations. Robert H. Davis, District building inspector, said a sprinkler system had to be installed, some stairways had to be inclosed and other smaller improvements made before the hotel would be allowed to operate.

One official said, however, that it presented the picture of a hotel being moved to take care of an overflow of war workers in North Carolina when the housing situation was critical here in the District.

The floating hotel, with all the palatial trimmings of an ocean liner, is expected to begin the long journey down the Potomac River on its way to Elizabeth City, N. C., in a "few days," one official said.

No "Papers" Are Signed.

The sea-going hotel probably will be towed by a commercial tug. Elizabeth City is near the Virginia border. Mr. Bulkley insisted he has signed "no papers" for the boat's change of hands.

Under the war laws, the floating hotel could be chartered as any liner or boat for the duration and either turned over to the original owners or a settlement made after the war.

The craft was docked here at Seventh and Maryland S.W. It had been brought from Fort Lauderdale, Fla., last September by Mr. Bulkley. He was said to have done a thriving business there, but brought it to Washington as a more lucrative field.

The ship was built in 1862 as the U. S. S. Tonawanda. It was used in both the Spanish-American War and World War I. Its original displacement was 4,000 tons.

Author of Questionnaires Says Writing Them Is Much Harder Than Finding the Answers

By ALFRED TOOMBS.

C. B. Lawrence is the man who's in charge of writing questionnaires for the OPA. "And if anyone thinks it's hard to answer the questions," he says, "they ought to try to ask them."

Mr. Lawrence is head of the Statistical Standards Office of OPA, which is the quiz center of the agency. He has on his staff a psychologist, some statisticians and economists and just enough stenographers to furnish an ideal proving ground for questions of doubtful clarity.

Half of his job is to get questionnaires out in an orderly, understandable form. The rest of his job is to keep questionnaires from coming out. There are a lot of curious people in the OPA, and they propose questionnaires by the bushel.

Mr. Lawrence tries to hold them down.

Must Be Understandable.

Writing a questionnaire is just about as easy as carving the Gettysburg Address on the head of a pin with a post office pen, Mr. Lawrence says. "You've got to avoid bi-modal distribution, halo effects, statistical stand-offs—and besides, the questionnaires must be understandable."

The psychologist on Mr. Lawrence's staff is Dr. Sual B. Sells, who has had experience in preparing intelligence tests, ballots, questionnaires and the like. Dr. Sells has to read all the questionnaires that go out of OPA.

There is a staff of 12 men whose job is to see that all OPA questionnaires make sense. They check over all the questions to see that they are not ambiguous and to determine whether they are necessary. They cut out a lot of questions, simplify others.

"The lawyers are the worst," it was explained. "They think that if a question makes sense, it isn't legal. What we need is lawyers who can write English."

The first consideration in Dr. Sells' mind in studying a question is to determine whether it is written in the language of the man who will answer it. Certain businessmen use a language of their own. If you use their peculiar language in asking questions, they'll get a warm feeling that you know what you're doing in putting out a questionnaire.

Samples Tried Out.

In questionnaires written for ordinary citizens, Dr. Sells has to make sure the language is understandable to the average intelligence. Sometime, he tries questions out on the stenographers. Other times they send men out over the country with sample questionnaires which they try out on householders selected at random.

On questionnaires which they want to be sure that every one can understand, they send samplers down into the slums of Washington.

"When questionnaires are proposed to us by operating units of OPA, there are some strange questions included. We try to cut them down."

Dr. Sells produced a thick file which contained a four-page draft of what was originally proposed as the OPA questionnaire to be filled out by every one applying for an "A" card for gasoline. It was re-

plete with such questions as "How many miles are your present tires good for?"

When the Statistical Standards office released this questionnaire, it was only half a page long.

"They get some lusus," says Dr. Sells. "Listen to this one: 'If status of car owner changes with respect to necessary distance travelled, the office of issuance must be informed of such change.' What they meant—and what we finally said—was 'If your right to a supplementary gas ration changes, you must notify your local board.'"

Looks for Right Approach.

Dr. Sells looks out for the right psychological approach. It is possible to suggest answers by the manner in which you ask questions. Dr. Sells tries to see that the OPA questionnaires induce people to tell the truth.

For instance, on the gasoline questionnaire, there could have been two questions like this: "What is your total mileage?" and "What part of this is not necessary?"

"That would have led people to exaggerate the amount of necessary driving," explains Dr. Sells. "Instead, the questions should be 'What is your necessary mileage in connection with business?' and 'What is your total mileage?' Then you would be more likely to get honest answers."

Dr. Sells says that you have to try very hard to make people understand the reason why they're filling out the questionnaires.

"They get mad if they think you're just asking them questions for no reason at all," he concedes. "And then we try to ask questions which can be answered readily. We don't want to ask a home owner some question which will make it necessary for him to go to the courthouse and search for the title to his place."

Experience has taught the ques-

tionnaire experts to use short words in quizzing the public. The latest model questionnaires will leave out words like premises and will say house, instead. Other substitutions include "live in" for "occupancy," "send" for "distribute," "name" for "designate" and "use" for "consume."

For every stack of questionnaires which businessmen have on hand, the OPA has a hundred stacks—representing all the rewriting done to keep them "simple."

Mr. Lawrence said that he got complaints from businessmen, all right.

"But not the kind you think," he added. "Businessmen write in here to complain that they have been discriminated against because they haven't received questionnaires which were mailed to their competitors. That's the way it goes."

Two Deputies Named

ROCKVILLE, Md., Dec. 12 (Special).—Sheriff Robert W. Farmer has appointed Dorian F. Darne and John H. Oldfield special deputy sheriffs for Montgomery County to guard property during the war.

Servicemen Praise Stuart Junior High Leave Quarters

Gymnasium, Showers And New Cots Enjoyed By 60 Here on Leave

Technical Sgt. Ernest Flint of Oakland, Calif., punched one of the mattresses in the new servicemen's lodging at Stuart Junior High School last night and beamed with pleasure.

"It's soft," he said. "Oh, boy." Then he walked into the shower room and turned on the water in one of the wash basins.

S. R. O. by Nine O'Clock. "It's hot," he said. "Oh, boy." "I guess this is going to be strictly okay," Sgt. Flint said to Attendant Dan Rosa as he laid his 50 cents on the desk.

Fifty-nine other soldiers, seamen and marines decided the same thing last night when they saw the rows of new cots, sheets and blankets ready for them in the warm high school gymnasium. An hour after the Traveler's Aid booth in Union Station had started directing servicemen to the school for a night's lodging, all but 26 of the 60 cots had been signed for. By 9 p.m. the Traveler's Aid booth had handed out all of its tickets.

Most of the boys did not come to the school until they tired of entertaining themselves in the downtown area. A few, however, came to the school early to sign up and take a shower before they started downtown. Only four blocks from Union Station, the school was described by Seaman Frank Mady of Philadelphia, as "a dead clinch" to find.

Hospitality Committee.

More school gymnasiums may be opened to servicemen, according to War Hospitality Committee member Winfree Johnson, if the demand continues as it did last night. The committee, part of the Office of Civilian Defense, arranged for the use of the school gymnasium. The lodging is operated by the Welfare

and Recreational Association. Other members of the hospitality committee, who came to inspect the gymnasium last night were A. J. Williams, president of the Welfare and Recreational Association, and Mrs. Henry Grattan Doyle, president of the Board of Education, who was accompanied by Lawson J. Cantrell, assistant superintendent in charge of junior high schools.

A similar lodging for colored soldiers will be opened at the Mott School in a few weeks. The servicemen have to make their own beds and be out by 10 a.m. Sunday morning. In return they get soap, towels and bedding for 50 cents.

"The first place I've seen," said Marine Walter Schwab of Quantico, Va., "where it didn't break your heart to pay the price of admission."

Christmas Program

The Fairfax Methodist Church Choir will present a program of Christmas and sacred music for the benefit of the church organ fund at 8 o'clock tonight at the church.

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Women Model World's Ships At Navy's Basin in Carderock



Laura Davis shown placing a mast on a model of the German battleship Von Tirpitz. Miss Davis is one of 40 women turning out scores of model enemy ships for the United States Navy at the Taylor Model Basin, Carderock, Md. The miniature ships are sent to carriers and shore stations for identification study. —Official U. S. Navy Photograph.

Nearly 40 women from Washington and vicinity are well on their way toward proficiency in exacting tasks in the machine shop of the David W. Taylor Model Basin at Carderock, Md., the Navy revealed yesterday.

Although most of them have had less than a month's training, they are doing jobs normally filled by regular apprentices with more than a year's training. They are thus releasing other ordnance workers for the armed services.

In obtaining the women, the Navy turned first to the wives and relatives of its male employees. So far, the women are learning tool room procedure, milling machine operations and instrument production, under the tutelage of James R. McRae and his staff of skilled machinists. They are learning model-making in the model room, which looks like a playland paradise. Supervising Modelmaker Dana L. Ferhald is in charge of the work there.

Expressing pride in his new women workers, Mr. McRae explained that since the basin deals almost exclusively with experimental material, no two operations are exact alike, and almost every piece produced is different from the others. Mr. McRae also emphasized the

patriotism of the women, most of whom do their housework in the evenings after their days at the basin. One woman signed papers last week to release her husband to join the Army, leaving her with three small children to care for in addition to her work at Carderock.

The home-making side of the picture has not been neglected by the Navy, however, and a day nursery has been established in a nearby church. It is operated by the wife of a Taylor basin executive, herself a graduate nurse, who picked this method of releasing women for war work—that they may release men for combat.

Work in the model room is divided into two phases—the construction of wooden drafting room models for architects and the building of "teacher attack models" of ships of the various nations to be sent to training schools, shore stations and the fleet. Study of these leads to faster and easier identification of enemy and friendly ships at sea.

Women have taken to this work "like old hands," their foreman said. Mr. McRae said he did not see any reason why they could not progress to a point where they could take over most of the machine work, under supervision of a few men.