RAILROADS ENTITLED TO FEEDER AIR RIGHTS SAYS AUTHORITY

Railroads should be allowed to engage in local and "feeder" air services because they are "in most respects best fitted for the task," Thurman W. Van Metre, Columbia University professor of transportation, told the Civil Aeronautics Board at a hearing in Washington October 22.

Rebel Air Freight, Inc., GM&O's air subsidiary, filed an application May 1, 1942, with the C. A. B. for authority to engage in air transportation in the territory served by our Railroad and to co-ordinate such services with rail, bus and truck transportation already provided by The Rebel Route.

Testifying in behalf of Gulf, Mobile and Ohio Railroad and its subsidiary, Rebel Air Freight, Inc., and eight other railroads and their air-carrier subsidiaries, Prof. Van Metre said the railroads are better able "financially and from the standpoint of physical equipment and personnel" to do the pioneering in such services by air. His testimony before the C. A. B., which is conducting a general investigation as to the future of local feeder and pick-up air transportation services, pointed out that because railroads already have the necessary terminal sites, facilities for the maintenance and repair of equipment and trained agency and mechanical personnel in virtually every community large enough to have air service, they can provide such services at lower costs than any other agency.

(Continued on Page 6)

AN OMINOUS THREAT

Following the treachery and tragedy at Pearl Harbor in December, 1941, the Management of this Company declared early in 1942 in an advertisement entitled "America First" that the primary purpose in the operation of this railroad would be the effective prosecution of the war. This pledge will remain in force until our inevitable victory.

On November 9, 1943, a spokesman for certain railroad labor organizations, in testifying before a United States Senate Committee, made the following statement:

"We are going ahead with our strike vote, and when the day comes we shall fix a date to interrupt the transportation system of this nation. When we are convinced it is hopeless and that we are being stalled or given the run-around, we will put the mandate into effect."

Since this wage dispute is now wholly an issue between the labor unions and the Federal Government, it may be assumed that "stalled or given the run-around" refers to the Federal Government.

It is our desire to continue to run our trains—to the end that guns, ammunition, fuel, food and other vital material may be delivered to their destinations; to the end that troop trains may be handled with safety and dispatch; to the end that we may back the men we sent abroad to fight our battles.

We are still for "America First."

I. B. TIGRETT, President.
EDITORIALLY SPEAKING—

On the Rate Question...

WHY IS IT that it has never occurred to the general public to wonder why the manufacturers and other shippers who pay the freight bills are not the ones agitating the North-South rate case?

The answer is that most of those clamoring for a new method of making rates, based on mileage alone, are men who know almost nothing about the practical side of rate making, but who are trained orators and publicists who have used the word "Uniformity" to influence public opinion.

Does it seem likely that the railroads who operate almost all their mileage in the South, and have a large stake in the future prosperity of this region, would promote a system of rates which would destroy the territory and their own future welfare?

Disregarding the actual merits, shall the public believe the platform rate experts, or those men who have given a lifetime to the study of the economic structure of our system of American commerce?

—B.M.S.

On the News and Service...

ON NOVEMBER 4th, the News was 22 years old.

It was customary for the Editor to call attention to each birthday. With the passing years and the magazine a Railroad veteran, this practice of an anniversary editorial ended.

However, this year it seems fitting that the columns of the News be utilized once again on this occasion.

When the News was started our Railroad operated 453.58 miles. Each issue informed its readers of the necessity for BETTER SERVICE AND MORE BUSINESS . . . We were all customer conscious. Today Gulf, Mobile and Ohio operates 1968.01 miles.

The News wishes on this, its 22nd birthday, to remind its co-workers that

* * *

The most valuable asset a railroad can have is not its trackage, its locomotives, its rolling stock, or its buildings — but the good will of the public it serves.

* * *

Times or conditions do not alter the truth of the above. Old shippers know, and new shippers soon discover, that a spirit of personal helpfulness on the part of the employees, not only makes for more pleasant relations, but increases the efficiency of the service offered.

We have always had an outstanding record for service, and good customer relations. May we continue to deserve and add to the good will of the public, who entrust their lives and goods to us.

—B. M. S.

Testing the New Test Board—This new communications test board, on the second floor of our Mobile headquarters building, is the answer to a communications man's dream, in the words of the man who uses it. Designed by Supt. of Telephone, Telegraph and Signals Kenneth Goodwin and Supervisor of Telephone and Telegraph George D. McDonald, whom you see giving it a trial test, the board was built by Mr. McDonald with the aid of Telephone Maintainer Earl Morris and Lineman-Signalman Harry Hall. The board is the termination point for all telephone (seven circuits) and telegraph (five wires) lines of the entire system.

Keeping the flow of wartime traffic steady, GM&O uses both system telephone and telegraph; thus, the new test board is doubly important. Some highlights of the board's performances are: through it you may talk over five different circuits; it provides one more carrier (radio) telephone line than we had before; the loudspeaker can be cut in at any time for testing any of the telephone circuits; you can talk on any telephone circuit from the board; you can test any telegraph circuit also; a meter shows how much power is flowing in any telephone wire to which it may be connected; a telegraph repeater device makes it possible to send a line wire on one division of the system and have it automatically repeated over another; there are four telephone and two telegraph circuits working over only four wires between Mobile and Meridian, and each of the telephone circuits requires two wires each.

GIVE THE PRESENT WITH A FUTURE...

If you're wondering what kind of Christmas presents to give your loved ones or friends, why not settle on war bonds or stamps! There's a present with a future, since all war bonds earn a handsome interest in their 10 year maturity. Money set aside in bonds now, and given as presents, will thus grow with the years.

Named VFW Commander

Genial John M. Spikes, Telegraph Operator at the Mobile Conception Street station, assumed command of the Robert L. Bullard Post No. 49, Veterans of Foreign Wars, during the month.

Commander Spikes, with our Railroad 31 years, was named to head the post after Lt. Commander William F. Roe, the former chief, was called to active duty in the Coast Guard reserves. Mr. Spikes has held several minor posts in the VFW and also is a member of the American Legion.
Reporting an incident of

**Courtesy and Consideration**

Our Gulf Transport bus, loaded with passengers, pulled out of the busy Greyhound Terminal in St. Louis November 9 right on schedule and headed for Rebel trainside at our East St. Louis Trendley Avenue Station.

The trip was routine and without moment until the bus approached the St. Louis end of Eads bridge. Then, suddenly, a Negro woman passenger seated to the rear of the bus stepped hurriedly toward the front to tell the bus operator that she had discovered her pocketbook containing her money and railroad ticket was missing. Explaining her predicament, she said she felt sure she had left her valuables in the bus station.

Without hesitation, the driver wheeled the bus about and returned to the terminal through crowded lanes of traffic. Nervously but with sympathy the driver and passengers waited, as the woman jumped out and ran into the station. Sure enough, within a few minutes, she returned with her pocketbook in hand and a smile on her face.

The Rebel’s departure was delayed slightly but a major point of our policy had again been proved—courtesy and consideration for all.

**Railroaders All, Four Generations**

Miss Dorothy Watts, whose great grandfather, grandfather and father have built up a family railroad heritage before her, is a Stewardess on The Southerner, streamlined train of the Southern Railway operating between New Orleans and New York. Our Agent at Newton, Miss., W. W. Watts, has been with our and predecessor railroads 31 years and also spent five years on another system; his father, H. H. Watts, retired in 1929 after 56 years of service on the old A. & V. and IC railroads; and the latter’s father, J. T. Watts, was Agent at Newton for the old A&V and M&V roads from 1862 until his death in 1901.

**Masonite Visit**

In company with Homer Paul, Masonite Traffic Manager, other officials of the Masonite Company, and Rebel Route Traffic Manager K. G. Gottschaldt, we had an interesting trip through the big Laurel plant of that company recently.

We saw Mississippi pine logs turned into finished Masonite Products and loaded in cars within the short space of one hour. Masonite is being used on all the war fronts, and in this connection Masonite officials at Laurel, some of them who had a hand in the construction, are wondering how their Italian factory has fared during the recent bombings, as it is situated in the general location of the Brenner Pass.

The Masonite process originated in finding a way to utilize saw mill waste. Now the use of wood fiber is general, and the Masonite plant is the largest single industry in the state of Mississippi.

General George C. Marshall, chief of staff of the United States Army, arises early and gets to work between 7:30 and 8 a.m. “No one ever had an original thought after 3 p.m.,” he once remarked.
MILITARY POLICE RIDE G M & O's REBELS. KEEP CHECK ON UNIFORMED PERSONNEL.

If YOU'VE BEEN a passenger on any of our Rebels recently, you've undoubtedly noticed the Army's khaki cops, the boys who flash the MP brassards on their arms and ride with authority.

They walk up and down the aisles of the train, sometimes with the conductor taking up tickets, sometimes by themselves, without fanfare and with an air of friendliness. The Military Police of this war are more than just MP's, as many a soldier and civilian on the Rebels has learned.

Oh, their guns bulge from their hips and their nightsticks sway from their belts, but theirs a peaceful mission and an arrest or incident where a member of the armed service gets out of hand is a rare exception.

"I've been riding the Rebels as an MP for nine months, off and on," explained Corporal William Wyatt, of Paducah, Ky., one of the sturdy soldiers furnished for the task by the 852nd guard squadron at Meridian's Key Field, "and I've never had to make an arrest."

"The boys always know what's expected of them," said another, "and you'll almost always find them co-operating."

The MP's always ride in pairs. Their manual states, among other things, that they're supposed to check the train once an hour, accompany the conductor through the train and keep their eyes peeled for infractions of rules.

One of the MP's chief jobs is to look-out for soldiers who are AWOL. They wake up servicemen on the trains so the conductor may check their tickets, and at the same time the MP checks the serviceman's papers. They see to it that servicemen keep properly attired. They have been taught in school how to handle men, and are versed in the art of ju-jitsu. They can take a gun off a man before he can say "jackrabbit," and, like any good policeman, they use their own gun only as a last resort.

Above all, they are polite and trained to be the serviceman's friend. As a matter of fact, they make a substantial contribution to order among civilian travelers, though they have no authority over them. The mere fact that they keep a patrol on the train makes for order among all. While they may never be called upon to make an arrest, they cannot sleep as other passengers do at night. One of a pair must keep a vigil at all times, and the other cannot be far away.

On 'Baby Flat-top' at Sea.

"I'm getting some first hand info on life aboard one of Kaiser's 'Baby Flat-tops,' and brother it's not like working on the second deck of the GM&O building," writes Yeoman First Class P. D. DeWitt from somewhere at sea. Yeoman DeWitt, who was secretary to Mechanical Superintendent Gray at the time of his enlistment in the Navy, has been in the service more than a year now.

You'll see the MP's on our trains between Mobile and St. Louis.

When an officer gets out of hand, the MP's ask the aid of officers of equal or higher rank on the train. If an offending officer happens to be a Marine or Naval man, the MP's call on the ranking Marine or Naval officer on the train for help; if there are none, they themselves act.

Each morning a pair gets on at Meridian and rides to Mobile, returning to the Key Field base that afternoon on the Rebel. Another pair boards the train at Meridian and rides all the way to St. Louis, doubling back the very next day.

"That St. Louis run is kinda tough on us," admitted one of the boys, "because we have to do most of our sleeping in the daytime."

But their job is sometimes amusing, if tiring. Corporal John A. Nixen of Kingstree, S. C., another veteran Rebel MP rider, tells this one:

A red-headed Irish boy who had been stationed for several months on a tiny island off the Louisiana coast was on the Rebel headed home for a long-awaited furlough. He had evidently been celebrating a little and had fallen asleep. The MP with me shook him to awaken him so the conductor could get his ticket. Twice the soldier roused, only to fall back asleep. Finally, he straightened up, and complained to the conductor, 'Man, what did you have to wake me for, anyway. I was dreaming the war was over and I was on my way home for good.'"
Pfc. Martin and Corp. Wyatt, a pair of the MP's, give the Rebel Engineer a friendly salute. The Engineer is C. L. Smith.
Private Enterprise vs. General Depression

"Out of this war will come some mighty famous generals whose names will live in history.

"I am mighty proud of all the generals this country has ever had, except General Depression.

"The only way to defeat General Depression is with Private Enterprise, and I hope he ain't a casualty of this war."

—Jimmin Arrington, Collins, Miss., in his daily feature "Dear Editor," appearing in the Columbus Commercial Dispatch.

Miss Jacobs Marries

Miss Dorothy Jacobs, Rebel Hostess for about a year, was married during the month to Lieutenant (j.g.) J. Ray Beesley, USNR, in her home town of Humboldt, Tenn. Miss Jacobs was honored in a series of parties. The wedding took place on October 30.

The photograph at right was made just before sundown recently at Meridian, at the crossing near our freight station there.

Franklin's Words

Ring True

"The eyes of Christendom are upon us, and our honor as a people is become a matter of the utmost consequence to be taken care of. If we give up our rights in this contest, a century to come will not restore us to the opinion of the world. Present inconveniences are, therefore, to be borne with fortitude, and better times expected."—Benjamin Franklin.

BOXCARS ARE FIGHTERS IN THIS WAR, AS IN PRECEDING ONES

As inanimate as it may appear, the railroad boxcar has a fighting role in this war and a battle history from preceding wars.

Back in the War Between the States, Quartermaster General M. C. Meigs of the U. S. Army issued the following directive: "All cars will be unloaded and returned immediately. They must not be detained for storage purposes."

The boxcar's role in war is discussed fully in an article in the September issue of Nation's Business magazine, from which we have taken the preceding and following quotations:

"A distinguishing mark of the shipper-railroad teamwork in this war is alertness in heading off jams before they develop. By way of contrast, consider what happened at Stith, Ky., 30 miles southeast of Louisville, in 1918 when the Government was running the railroads. It was decided to create there the world's largest field artillery firing center—now the world's greatest depository of gold. Fort Knox. Thousands of freight cars of materials were started to Stith, with no notice to the railroad, and with no space for their unloading except one three-car sidetrack.

"Today, when a project of any sort is started, one of the first things done is to create an adequate track layout for handling the freight involved in construction and operation. Some of these lay-outs include more than 100 miles of track. During the great defense and war construction program, 8,000 miles of such tracks were built in one year."

"Making cars" is another form of shipper co-operation. They are 'made' not only by unloading them promptly but, whenever possible, loading them right out again. In a tight situation in the Southeast in July, for example, shippers themselves helped to avert threatened local boxcar shortages. Out of 60 refrigerator cars received, 59 were unloaded within 24 hours. The same sort of treatment of box cars 'created' as many as 500 additional cars in a couple of days in this area alone."

"There is also teamwork between railroads themselves. The fact that any freight car of any railroad may go over the rails of any other is one of the important commonplace of American commerce. Passenger cars, however, usually stayed at home, except in the case of certain regularly established long distance trains running over more than one line, and of course, in the case of the peripatetic Pullman car which goes everywhere. Locomotives are, ordinarily, even more steady 'homebodies' than are coaches."
RAILROADS ENTITLED TO FEEDER AIR RIGHTS

(Continued from Page 1)

Moreover, Prof. Van Metre continued, railroads entering civil aviation "would not want to establish their new business as a short-run enterprise," but rather "they would build for economically sound conditions of a permanent nature."

Railroads Lead All Transportation

Pointing out that the railroads will continue to be "the backbone of our domestic transportation system," Prof. Van Metre said:

"We have recently had and are still having a salutary demonstration of the present indispensability of the railroad as a necessary factor in our national defense. This is not said in disparagement of other forms of transportation; they, too, have been of vital importance to the war effort. But everybody knows that the railroad is by far our most important beast of burden. Everybody knows it has been required to carry a vast amount of the traffic which other agencies formerly carried, but which they could not continue to handle because of exigencies of war over which we had no control."

"Everybody knows that it would have been physically impossible for any other type of carrier yet developed, whatever its inherent advantages, to have performed the transportation service which the railroad has performed during this war. Everybody knows what a magnificent job the railroads have done, carrying the largest volume of traffic they have ever been called on to transport, with an amount of equipment considerably less than what they possessed at the time of their previous peak load."

Air Service In Step With Policy

Prof. Van Metre held that it would be in the public interest for the railroads, under certain conditions, to enter the field of domestic air transportation, as such a step "would often serve to give effect to the national transportation policy which the Congress has adopted." In fact, he said, "the arbitrary exclusion of surface carriers from participation in the development of air transportation might interfere with the establishment of a genuinely national transportation system, and it might conceivably interfere with the proper development of civil aviation itself."

Calling attention to the fact that railroads in recent years have engaged in highway transportation, Prof. Van Metre stated that "in so doing they are not only improving the transportation services of the railroads, but by healthy competition, in many areas, with independent highway services, they are making a genuine contribution to the further development of efficient highway transportation."

Co-ordination of Services

Prof. Van Metre expressed the opinion that there may be instances where railroad ownership of highway carriers has facilitated the coordination of railroad and motor vehicle transportation, thereby creating a greater efficiency in service. He contended that still greater coordination of transportation would be effected if the railroads were permitted to supplement their present services with service by air.

"In transportation," the university professor said, "the goal of coordination is to employ all modes of transportation in such a way that we shall have the most efficient, the most convenient, the most economical, the safest and the speediest transportation service possible for the movement of persons and property throughout the length and breadth of the country and all over the world."

This goal, Prof. Van Metre told the Board, can sometimes be more easily reached if various types of carrier are under the control of a single agency.

Declaring that "if we are to have a strong, efficient national transportation system, the railroad must be preserved," Prof. Van Metre stated that "the railroads are in a position to take the lead in giving the United States a completely coordinated transportation system."
WAR'S EFFECTS SHOWN IN SURVEY OF TYPICAL G. M. & O. RAILROAD OFFICE

AMERICA WILL have been at war two years on December 7. Slowly but surely, it has had telling effects upon the country at large, and by the same process has caused many changes in our households.

Already realizing, of course, the patriotism and stamina our men and women of The Rebel Route have been showing in performing their daily tasks to keep the trains and buses and trucks moving with vital shipments, we decided to tabulate the war's effect on the families of one typical GM&O office. So, we happened in one day recently at the Meridian dispatcher's office, and here is what we found:

Energetic Chief Dispatcher Stanley Wilson, headphones clamped to his ears and piles of dispatching sheets before him, was busy keeping the trains moving. After exchanging greetings, we popped questions at him at every full event to ascertain just how the war had affected his family.

“Well, Stanley, Jr., is overseas—a staff sergeant in the Army Air Forces—and has been for nearly two years,” he replied. “And altogether there are six members of my family in the services... One of my nephews is a prisoner of war of the Japs and two others are overseas, one in India. Two of my wife’s nephews are in the Navy and were on the Yorktown and Wasp when they were torpedoed.”

James M. Elliott, First Trick Dispatcher, sat in the next room, saying little but keeping his eyes glued to the train sheet before him and his ears trained to the loudspeaker to the left.

“My son, Perry, is a Second Lieut. in the Air Forces somewhere in England,” he answered to our query, and one of my daughters is a parachute inspector in a Detroit war plant. One son-in-law is a Lieutenant Colonel with the U. S. Engineers in California and another is a Sergeant in the Army Intelligence service in California.” Another son, William C. Elliott, was in the Army radio school at Mississippi State College last year when he died suddenly.

Out in the front office flashing messages over the “bug,” sat William Dabbs Long, Sr., First Trick Telegraph Operator, who has one son, William Dabbs Long, Jr., “My son recently completed boot training at the San Diego Naval base,” he said, “and now is at Texas A. & M. College learning radio.” He's our only child and my wife and I are left alone.”

Knowing that another crew carried on the round-the-clock duties of this office when these men were off duty prompted an inquiry about them.

“Well, the daughter of Second Trick Dispatcher J. E. Peterman works at Key Field,” someone put in, and “Operator Hussey has three sons in the service.” Night Chief Dispatcher Peter K. Gwia has a stepson in the service.”

“Rationing and shortages have made everyone feel the pinch of war,” we suddenly thought, “but, gosh, just about everybody has a real and personal interest in seeing this thing through as quickly as possible.”

“And everybody has a personal reason for buying war bonds and living up to the mandates of a good patriot, too.”

Tells of Research
Development Director Robert, in company with M. H. Bruner of the DuPont Chemical company, appeared at a number of meetings in our territory during the month. Mr. Bruner told of the many products developed by DuPont laboratories and described the opportunity of the South almost limitless in such research and development. The program was conducted at meetings of civic clubs and schools, as an educational feature.
In the Name of Safety

“Not More Than Eighteen”

The full cooperation of every officer and employee is necessary to keep personal injuries to a minimum.

“NOT MORE THAN EIGHTEEN” symbolizes a grim determination to reduce the number of reportable employe injuries to “not more than eighteen” during the last quarter of 1943.

An urgent appeal to all Safety Chairmen was made by Vice-President and General Manager Brock, asking that they intensify their efforts to reduce reportable employee injuries at least 50% during the month of October, November and December.

While the ultimate goal is a perfect record, the results of this Campaign during October were most encouraging. There were three reportable injuries to employees on duty over the entire system. One of these occurred in the Transportation Department, one in the Maintenance of Way Department, and one in the Mechanical Department. This is a great improvement over the average of 11 per month during the first nine months, and is the best record during any month so far this year.

Let “NOT MORE THAN EIGHTEEN” be a reminder to you to “BE SAFE—NOT SORRY”!

Mr. Gill Mourned

The many friends of Mr. J. O. Gill will regret to learn of his death after a short illness, October 29th, at his Mobile home.

For many years connected with our Railroad and holding positions from Commercial Agent to Asst. General Traffic Manager, he was widely known and liked by railroad and businessmen with whom he came in contact.

His cheery nature, and enthusiasm about all matters pertaining to the Transportation business, made him a popular figure and won him lasting friends everywhere he went.

Survivors include his widow, Mrs. Marguerite Brown Gill, and a son, John O. Gill, Jr., now in the Army.

The Rebel Route News extends to them its deepest sympathy.

Along-the-Line Scenes...

Miss Berry Addresses Louisville Rotary Club

Miss Merle Berry, Rebel Hostess, described the life of a train hostess to members of the Louisville, Miss., Rotary Club in a talk October 28. Her talk was so well received that the Winston County Journal of that city commented, “Miss Berry is a wonderful talker, as well as a charming person, and kept the members enthralled while discussing the purpose and duties of the R-hel hostess.”

Friendship Week

Editor:

Time marches on and in the course of time we come again to Friendship Week. This year from Sunday, Nov. 21 through Saturday, Nov. 27, I expect to be on the GM&O (The Road of Friendly Service) in the city of Meridian, Miss., during Friendship Week. As always, the slogan is, “Make a new friend each day.”

The friends we have bought with a price are the ones that fade away in the shadows when the path looks dark ahead, but a real friend is one who with faith in God and hope for a better day to come, and sees in the coming dawn a place where dreams come true.

On the southbound Gulf Coast Rebel I sat next to a middle-aged woman dressed in black who through the darkness of the night as the train sped south from Jackson, Tenn., never closed her eyes but seemed to be looking far beyond the train and the country through which we were passing, as if she were trying to pierce the future. But as we neared Meridian and the day began to break, there was a smile on her face. I turned to her and said, “Good morning.” She replied, “I just lost my husband and all through the night he seemed so far away, but now in God’s bright sunshine I see the beauty of the flowers and the song of birds seems sweeter than ever before. Now that the Valley of the Shadow of Death is passed, I believe I shall make new friends to help me to carry the load.”

We all need friends like her to bid us wait and watch for the sunrise. She had given to everyone in the coach a little more faith and her smile to greet the dawn was beautiful to see. Before the Rebel reached Meridian a little boy had gone to her seat and offered her an orange. In one day without leaving here seat on the Rebel, she had found seven new friends.

I have always thought the atmosphere of a train to be a most friendly place, for this is another of Life’s crossroads. So as we ride through Friendship Week, I am sure that the friends you find in the day coach will want to meet you again. For,

“Life is the mirror of king and slave,
It’s just what we are and do,
So keep in your heart the friends you’ve made
And they will live for you.”

Sincerely,

Rev. R. I. Bell,
Sky Pilot of the Rails.

Address: 744 Avenue G, Bogalusa, La.
IN THE SERVICE of THEIR COUNTRY

High Army Medals Awarded to Pair

The son of a GM&O official and a former GM&O employee were decorated with high honors during the month.

To Captain Vester J. Thompson, Jr., son of Assistant Vice-President Thompson, won the Legion of Merit medal for "exceptionally meritorious service," and to Staff Sergeant T. J. Carpenter, Jr., former Transportation Dept. employee, went the Air Medal and oak leaf cluster.

The Legion of Merit, outranked only by the Congressional Medal of Honor, the Distinguished Service Cross and the Distinguished Service Medal, was awarded to the twenty-five-year-old courageous son (born on Armistice Day) of our Assistant Vice-President by Lieutenant General Bretl. His citation tells the story:

"Captain Vester J. Thompson, Jr., Corps of Engineers, United States Army. For exceptionally meritorious service in the performance of his duties as in November, 1942, Captain Thompson (then First Lieutenant) was assigned the task of constructing an emergency landing field for an isolated beach off the shore of December. The location was surrounded by approximately one hundred miles of impassable jungle on the land side and the "Ocean on the sea side. Captain Thompson mobilized men, equipment, and materials and proceeded to the location of the work, where he landed at two o'clock on the morning of 17 November, 1942, in a heavy surf, and without the loss of either men or equipment. Captain Thompson demonstrated great devotion to duty and high technical skill in that he remained on the project during the entire time of operations, and with an average crew of nine Americans and twenty-nine natives initiated and carried to completion the construction of a runway 100 feet wide and 5000 feet long. Although adverse conditions prevailed during the entire time, the task was accomplished economically and in record time, with the entire project, including demobilization of equipment, completed by 15 January, 1943. Residence at appointment: Mobile, Alabama."

Twenty-one-year-old Sergeant Carpenter won the Air Medal for five successful bombing missions over Axis-held territory, exposing himself to "great personal danger" and reflecting "great credit" to the U.S. armed forces, according to his citation.

Although the medal was awarded on the basis of five missions, Carpenter has now made at least 10 missions, relatives say.

Two members of the Legal Department now in the armed forces but not previously reported are Andrew J. Thomas and M. L. Taliban, both members of the firm of our Division Counsel at Birmingham.

The Mail Train

Rebel Route Cars Get Around

Editor: While coming up here to Colorado, my wife and I started looking when we left Camp Van Dorn (Miss.) to see how many GM&O cars we could see on our way up here. Now believe it or not, we saw one car, at least, in every industrial town on our tour. One in Dallas, Tex., then three or four in the small towns in New Mexico. One in Trinidad, Pueblo and there have been three here in the last month and a half.

You know, that makes a fellow feel that he is not nearly so far from home as he thinks. Yes, it really makes you feel good to see something like that right from home. I used to think that the GM&O was a small road when I was in Mobile, but since getting in the Army, I have found out different. It is a big road and is playing a vital part in this war.

I am proud that I can say I worked on the GM&O and hope that some day I may return.

John C. Faust, Second Lt., 66th Infantry, Camp Carson, Colo.

Editor's Note: Lt. Faust was employed in our Passenger Dept.

Mr. J. O. Collins, Section Foreman, Wilmer, Ala.

Think about you and the GM&O every time I hear a flange squeak or a locomotive straining, or a whistle blowing... It won't be long now before I'm on the route again. Keep 'em rolling for a while, I'll be back.

W. G. Stubbfield, Track Supervisor, Laurel, now in the Navy.

Note: Mr. Stubbfield is an Ensign in the Navy.

Greetings from Iceland...

Editor: Having been over there for (censored) months, we found ourselves in a hot spot upon arrival here. It did not take us long to win the battle of the North Atlantic. We boys here may not get much glory, but all the less we do our tasks as if we were in the thick of combat until the enemy is defeated.

Well, I guess you would like to know something about this country which, by the way, is Iceland. The best way I can put it is just "one big rock" with a lot of snowy mountains, deep valleys, and swift flowing rivers. Reykjavik is the capital, and the largest city of which the population is 40,000. They speak Swedish, Norwegian and German mixed, and when you have it summed up it is Iceland.

Yours for victory,
William J. Raneger, Jr.
A.P.O., New York

Note: Pfc. Raneger was in the Mech. Dept., Meridian.
REBEL ROUTE MEN WHO RIDE TROOP TRAINS ARE SERVING THEIR COUNTRY

Experiences of the GM&O men who ride troop trains offer many interesting sidelights to the war effort, and a good insight into our military operations.

Riding the troop trains is no easy task, as any member of the Rebel Route Troop Train Troupe will testify. Passengers and Freight Department representatives, Special Agents, Trainmasters and train crews alike are playing a vital role in the war effort in one of the railroads' biggest responsibilities, that of moving troops about the nation.

Without going into statistics on movements of such troops or giving away any military secrets, we present some of the experiences told, from time to time, by several of the large number of our freight and passenger men who have been riding the soldier trains.

Passenger Representative Roy J. Fischer of our St. Louis office says that in all his travels on the "Troopers," he has never met any of the boys a second time and only once did he run across one that he knew—that one being Bill Alexander, former Gulf Transport Bus Operator.

As to what the boys who ride the trains in uniforms are thinking, all of the Troop Train Troupe will testify that they are always concerned about how far it is to the next town, where they're headed, how long they will ride, and above all, when they eat. The answers to the first three are generally kept secret, but you couldn't keep the last one from them very long.

In this connection, Mr. Fischer says one of his most interesting experiences was with a trainload of Russian sailors.

"When we arrived at Corinth, it was necessary to unload for lunch. None of the Russians could speak English. Our Yardmaster was trying to tell these boys to unload at once to avoid delay. Naturally, he couldn't make them understand and came running to me. I told him to see the train commander. I don't know what the train commander said, but it was only one word and those fellows unloaded like flies."

Commercial Agent W. B. Hahn of Montgomery, who has ridden many a troop train in the past year, had an interesting trip with some German prisoners of war. There were 400 Germans on the train, he says, most of whom were mere youths, all extremely curious.

"They wore a surly expression and didn't like our white bread," Hahn commented. "However, they liked the rest of the food and ate like they hadn't been fed that well in some time."

Division Passenger Agent T. P. Cumberland, who issued tickets for troop trains in the last war and who is a leading rider in this one, notes that the boys are almost always well-behaved, do very little damage to equipment and usually lounge around in comfort en route.

Recently on an all-Negro troop train, Mr. Cumberland was making a routine check of the train and as he passed a vestibule guard, the boy said sourly, "It sure is hard, ain't it?" Looking up, Mr. Cumberland said, "Why, what's the matter boy?"

"You see that street there," the Negro replied pointing out the window. "Well, I live just four houses down it." He was especially blue for a reason, since troops with rare exceptions can ever leave a troop train even when it stops.

Soldiers are fed from a kitchen set up in a baggage car, usually, and are attended by Pullman porters and in most instances conductors. They are not allowed to mail anything en route and generally don't know their destination until they're almost there.

When the passenger or freight men ride the troop trains, they must check the train at regular intervals, cooperate with the train commander (military authority), aid in arranging for supplies and provide any other such service. They ride for the entire trip on our line, while the Special Agents and others ride by divisions or districts.

And so the Freight and Passenger boys who before the war were Service Salesmen are now devoting most of their time in furthering the war effort.