HARRY TRUMAN

The new President knows about a veteran's post-war problems. He had plenty of them when he came home from France in 1919.

By YANK Washington Bureau

HARRY S. TRUMAN of Independence, Mo., the new President of the United States, was a captain and a major in France in the other war and evidently he wasn't chicken.

Because the men in his outfit—Battery D, 129th Field Artillery of the 35th Division, now fighting in Germany—went out of their way to do something nice for him on the way home after the Armistice. They took a cut from every pot of their crap games on the transport and bought him a loving cup, four feet high.

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President Harry Truman

The cup is still the President's proudest possession and the D Battery men are still his close friends. He has never forgotten the things they talked about on that transport and the hard time he and they had getting back in the swing of Missouri civilian life after they were discharged.

He came home and married his girl, Bess Wallace, in June 1919. He and another veteran raised a little money and opened a small haberdashery store. It failed and they lost everything. Truman had plenty of worries before he started in law and politics a few years later and managed to win election as county judge from his section of Jackson County—not a judicial office as the name implies, for in Missouri the County Court is an administrative agency of government whose members are called judges.

Although it is too early to make predictions about what kind of an all-around job he will be able to do in the White House, it is safe to say that the memory of what he went through 25 years ago as a new civilian makes Truman more aware of veterans' post-war problems than most Presidents we have had.

His first executive order after taking office was one giving veterans of this war job priority in U. S. Civil Service.

His first public speech as President, before Congress, included the words: "Our debt to the heroic men and valiant women in the service of our country can never be repaid. They have earned our undying gratitude."

The next evening he spoke to the armed forces over the radio, reminding them of his own combat service in France with the 35th Division. "I know the strain, the mud, the misery, the utter weariness of the soldier in the field," he said. "I know too his courage, his stamina, his faith in his comrades, his country and himself.

"We are depending on each and every one of you."

Truman's concern for the servicemen has been strong all through his public life. He is an active American Legion man and as a U. S. senator he was an active supporter of the GI Bill of Rights. Only a few days before the death of President Roosevelt brought him into the White House, he devoted his speech at a Grover Cleveland memorial dinner in Buffalo, N. Y., to facts and figures knocking down civilian fear that the returning veterans may flood the labor market and cause widespread unemployment.

As he announced in his address to Congress, Mr. Truman intends to follow the general line of Roosevelt polices. "I will support those ideals with all my strength and all my heart," he said. But Truman's way of supporting the Roosevelt ideals may be as different from Roosevelt's way as the difference between the two men's backgrounds and personalities. And that is a difference as wide as the distance between Dutchess County, N. Y., and Jackson County, Mo.

Roosevelt was an Eastern blue-blood who went to Groton School—so exclusive that you can't get in unless your grandfather belonged to the right clubs—and Harvard University. Truman's father couldn't afford to let him go to college. He quit school early and worked in the bank in Lamar, Mo., the town where he was born. Then his family got him to come back and help out on the family farm until he went to war. Roosevelt was a wealthy man. Truman came into the White House with the smallest family fortune of any President of this century.

Roosevelt started mixing into politics as a youngster with a Harvard accent and Brooks Brothers clothes whose neighbors in fashionable Dutchess County had invited him to take part in

Presudent Truman was sworn in on April 12, 1945

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community affairs. When Truman ran for the judge's job in Jackson County, he needed the money it paid.

When Roosevelt was a bright young Assistant Secretary of the Navy and the up-and-coming Democratic nominee for the Vice Presidency 25 years ago, Truman was just another veteran.

When Roosevelt was nominating Al Smith at the Democratic Convention in 1924, Truman was about to get beaten for re-election as county judge. Roosevelt the next year was a business executive in New York. Truman was back on the farm. He stayed at farming until 1930 when, at the age of 46, he managed to make a come-back and get elected county judge again. Roosevelt by that time was governor of New York and already regarded as a cinch for the Presidency.

Truman didn't get into national politics as a senator until 1934, when Roosevelt was not only President but also was already being referred to as "That Man in the White House." The story is that Truman's debut in national politics was somewhat of an accident. They say he went to see Tom Pendergast, the Kansas City political boss, about a county job. "I'm sorry, Harry," Pendergast is supposed to have said to him. "The only thing I can offer you right now is a U.S. senatorship."

Truman's relations with Pendergast, who was convicted on an income-tax-evasion rap in 1939, have caused some people to raise their eyebrows. The new President makes no bones about the fact that he and the late Kansas City boss were on good speaking terms. He points out calmly that Pendergast never asked him to do anything corrupt and that he got more votes for the Pendergast machine in Missouri than it ever got him. He was re-elected to the Senate in 1940 without Pendergast's help.

The Trumans' family life isn't much like the Roosevelts', either. Back in Independence they lived in a rambling frame house, the kind that has colored glass borders in the parlor windows, built by Mrs. Truman's grandfather 80 years ago. It has a swing on the front porch. The President's 91-year-old mother lives on the old farm at Grandview, not far away. Her boast that Harry could plow the straightest furrow in Jackson County had a big play in the newspapers after her son was sworn in as President.

Mrs. Truman used to sit in front of her husband when they were kids together in the class of 1901 at the three-year Independence High School. (He can name today nearly all of the 40 other boys and girls in the class.) He carried her books home every afternoon and they went to the Baptist Sunday School together, too. When they started keeping company, the whole town approved of the match.

When Mr. Truman came to the Senate in 1934, he brought his wife along as his secretary. "She's my chief adviser," he says. "I never write a speech without going over it with her." Until they moved into the White House, they lived in a small Washington apartment with no maid. Mrs. Truman did her own cooking. Lately, of course, they have been getting invitations to big parties in the Capital. Their easy informality makes a good impression. Mr. Truman at one of the last parties he attended as Vice President played a piano duet of "Chopsticks" with Rosa Ponselle, and it went over big. Mrs. Truman, according to women who know about such things, looks well in evening clothes and doesn't put on social airs. When somebody asked her recently about her previous social life, she smiled and said, "Well, there was the Missionary Society, of course, and the Art Club."

The Trumans' 21-year-old daughter Mary Margaret goes along when her parents spend an evening out. She is a pretty girl who would like to study to be a singer, but her father, conscious of his own lack of a college degree, is making her finish George Washington University first. Mary Margaret doesn't have much to say as a rule. At the Chicago Convention, when it began to look as though her father was going to get the Vice-Presidential nomination, she jumped to her feet and yelled, "Yea, team!" Then she blushed and looked around to see if anybody had noticed.

Unlike his predecessor, who was very fond of Camels, Mr. Truman doesn't smoke. He takes an occasional drink, usually bourbon. He plays the piano seriously, especially Chopin pieces, and he likes bridge and poker. "I learned poker in France," he says, "and it was a costly education. As yet it hasn't paid any dividends."

PEOPLE in Washington and Missouri who know Mr. Truman intimately say that in supporting the Roosevelt ideals the new President will dele-

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gate more authority than FDR, who tried to make most of his own decisions and often became involved in details that might have been pushed off on his assistants. At his first press conference, Mr. Truman said he planned, for instance, to let the State Department handle the San Francisco conference by itself. He explained that he intended to spend most of his Administration in the White House at his desk and pounded it with his fist to emphasize that point.

Roy Roberts, managing editor of the Kansas City *Star*, who knows Mr. Truman from away back, says that this readiness to delegate authority will be the predominating new feature of his Administration. "Each department or bureau head will be expected to go ahead and run his own show," Roberts writes. "If they make good, fine. If they come a cropper—well, Truman is not the sort who will hang onto them long."

Roberts and others who are in the position to make authoritative predictions about Mr. Truman also expect him, as a former senator, to turn more frequently to Congress for advice and recommendations than Mr. Roosevelt did. The first day he was President Mr. Truman broke a precedent by having lunch at the Capitol. Republican leaders in Congress like Sen. Arthur Vandenburg of Michigan and Rep. Joe Martin of Massachusetts are his good friends. He gets along very well with the Southern Democrats in both Houses. Jackson County was largely Confederate in sentiment during the Civil War, and Mr. Truman's father was a Confederate veteran. James F. Byrnes, the former "Assistant President," returned to Washington from Spartanburg, S. C., where he had gone into retirement only a week before, as soon as Mr. Roosevelt died. He was the first person called to the White House for a conference by Mr. Truman. The new President is said to regard Byrnes as one of the ablest figures in American public life.

Mr. Truman now occupies the Presidency, of course, because he won the Democratic Vice-Presidential nomination in Chicago last summer. Two things won him the nomination. The first was the fact that he alone was acceptable to Mr. Roosevelt and to both the conservative element of the Democratic Party and its liberal wing. The second was the excellent performance of the Truman Committee in the investigation of our Gov-

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Mr. Truman charged in the Senate in February 1941 that Government agencies were awarding defense contracts to personal favorites, most of them large corporations. He called for the organization of a Senate committee to investigate the situation. A month later, the Senate organized such a committee with him as its chairman. The committee is generally credited with having done a terrific job. It could have been used for sensational, headline-making muckraking. Mr. Truman instead saw to it that the investigations of spending and contract awards were carried on in a spirit of constructive helpfulness. Although he did not hesitate to name names and to let the chips lie where they fell, the people whose work he investigated often thanked him for it afterward.

His committee's first report accused the War Department of "fantastically" poor judgment in the choice of camp sites and in its policy of renting vehicles and equipment for construction programs instead of buying them outright. Gen. Brehon B. Somervell, chief of the Army Service Forces, was quoted later as saying that the Truman inquiry saved the Government $200,000,000.

The Truman Committee also charged that U. S. shipyards were shaking down the Navy for unreasonable profits; that "dollar-a-year men" in key positions in Washington were delaying production and taking care of their friends with fat contracts; that automobile plants were far behind schedule in converting to war production; that American fighter planes in 1941 and the early part of 1942 were no good; that housing plans for defense and war workers were snafued; that the big steel firms, trying to squash small competitors, were to blame for the shortage of steel and scrap then prevalent; that the Navy's Bureau of Ships had rejected a design for an effective invasion landing craft and had spent millions of dollars "using models of its own design despite

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President Harry Truman

President Harry S Truman meets the press for the first time in in the executive room of the White House. The room was jammed with the largest number of newsmen it ever held in the history of Presidential press conferences. There were 348 reporters fornewspapers all over the country, not to mention 50 visitors.

repeated failures thereof"; that I. G. Farbenindustrie and the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey had a cartel agreement which worked to the advantage of the Axis by hindering the development of synthetic rubber in the U. S.

Mr. Truman called on Mr. Roosevelt one day in January 1942 to tell him that his committee was going to recommend that one man should run the whole war-production program. The next day Mr. Roosevelt announced Donald M. Nelson's appointment as war-production head. As a result of the Truman Committee's report, dollar-a-year men bowed out.

Mr. Truman summed up his committee's goal by saying, "The thing to do is to dig up this stuff now and correct it. If we run this war program efficiently there won't be any opportunity for someone to undertake a lot of investigation after the war and cause a wave of revulsion that will start the country on the downhill road to unpreparedness and put us in another war in 20 years."

LIKE Mr. Roosevelt, the new President believes that another war can come just as quickly from a lack of cooperation between nations as it can from the lack of military preparedness. One of the main themes of his campaign speeches last fall was that the U. S. should never return to isolationism. As a senator who described himself as a "common-sense liberal" he was a strong supporter of the Roosevelt foreign policies. According to his boyhood friend, Charles G. Ross of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, he arranged the luncheon that led to the Ball-Burton-Hatch-Hill Resolution in the Senate calling for a full American share in a world-peace organization.

Once when he was discussing lend-lease, he remarked: "When anybody cries on my shoulder about lend-lease, I always say that for every hundred million dollars we gave them, we saved one hundred thousand lives. If we never get any of it back it will be money well spent."

MR. Truman is the type of President who doesn't stand on pomp and ceremony and likes to call people by their first names. The squads of Secret Service men who follow him around make him feel like a nuisance rather than like an important figure. His friends say he hates to bother or offend people. In that respect, he takes after his parents. His two grandfathers were named Shippe and Solomon. When Mr. Truman was born, his parents didn't want to offend either of them so they gave the boy the middle initial of "S" and let it go at that.

When he was in the Senate, the new President once commented about its ceremony and social procedure. "All this precedence and other hooey accorded to a senator isn't very good for the Republic," he said.

If he felt like that when he was an Army officer, it was no wonder the men in his battery presented him with the loving cup.

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