

Unique Americans



Rear-Admiral Samuel P. Carter

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

CONSULT Mr. Webster's large book of words and their definitions and there you will find one characterized thus: "Unique, a. Being without a like or equal; single in kind or excellence; sole." Despite this explicit definition, "unique" is a much-misused word.

Consider now the careers of three Americans and see whether or not the characterization of "unique" is aptly applied to them. One of them was the only man who ever held the rank of rear admiral in the United States navy and the rank of brigadier general in the United States army. Another was a man who, although not a native of America, held a position in the highest legislative body of one American government and then held successively three important offices in the executive department of another American government. Even more remarkable is the record of the third—not a native of America, he held several important state offices in two states, was elected United States senator from three different states, commanded American troops in two wars and was governor of an American territory.

Tennessee gave to the nation its only admiral-general. Samuel Powhatan Carter was his name and he was born in Elizabethtown, Carter county, August 6, 1819. He became a midshipman in the navy in 1840. Six years later he was promoted to the grade of passed midshipman and assigned to the U. S. S. Ohio.

From 1851 to 1853 he was assistant instructor of infantry tactics at the naval academy and was made a lieutenant in 1855. The next year he served in one of Uncle Sam's forgotten wars, the expedition to China. On July 11, 1861, Carter was temporarily transferred to the War department for the special duty of organizing troops in his native land, eastern Tennessee.

Carter soon proved to be as able a military as he had been a naval officer. He was appointed first colonel of the Second Tennessee volunteers, then acting brigadier general of volunteers, and on May 1, 1862, he received his full commission as commander of a brigade.

As a cavalry leader Carter distinguished himself particularly. On August 28, 1863, he defeated that matchless Confederate horseman, Gen. John H. Morgan, and the next day repeated his success against General Smith. He was present at the siege of Knoxville in December of that year and later commanded a division under Gen. John Schofield in the North Carolina campaign of 1865. On March 13, 1865, Carter was brevetted major general, and was mustered out of the army in January, 1866.

He immediately returned to the navy, having by this time been promoted to the rank of commander. He served as commandant at the naval academy from 1869 to 1872, having been promoted to the rank of captain in 1870. He was a member of the lighthouse board from 1876 to 1880, and was promoted to commodore in 1878. In 1881 he was honored by promotion to the rank of rear admiral on the retired list, this reward coming as a fitting climax to his extraordinary career in both branches of the United States service. In 1891 "Admiral-General" Carter, truly a unique American, died in the Capital of the country he had served so well during his lifetime of seventy-one years.

In the year 1811 a ship attempted to ascend the Mississippi river to New Orleans, but finding that port blocked by a British fleet it sailed away to the West Indies. Among its passengers, who landed on the island of St. Croix, was an English Jew, named Benjamin, and his wife. On August 11 a son was born to Mrs. Benjamin and given the name of Judah. Although Judah P. Benjamin was denied the right of being born on American soil, he was destined to become an important figure in American history.

Benjamin's boyhood was spent in Wilmington, N. C., until 1825, when



Judah P. Benjamin

Photographs of Carter and Shields, courtesy Army Information Service.

he entered Yale. After three years he left that institution without getting a degree and went to New Orleans, where he studied law in a notary's office. He was admitted to the bar in 1832 and spent the next few years practicing that profession with a short interim of school teaching.

Politics was next to engage his attention and he allied himself to the Whig party. In 1845 he was a member of the convention which met to revise the constitution of Louisiana, and it is noteworthy that this foreign-born citizen of Louisiana was responsible for placing in the new code a provision that the governor of that state must be a citizen born in the United States.

In 1848 Louisiana elected Benjamin as presidential elector at large, and four years later sent him to the United States senate, returning him there in 1857. He took a prominent part in the slavery dispute of those times, and during one of the exciting debates in the senate a dispute with Jefferson Davis, the senator from Mississippi, brought the two men to the verge of a duel which was averted only when Davis apologized.

Although Davis had disagreed violently with Benjamin in the senate he recognized the worth of the man, and when the former was chosen as President of the Confederate States of America he selected Benjamin as attorney general in his cabinet. In August, 1861, Benjamin was transferred to the War department, where his conduct of the war aroused such bitter hostility, even including charges of incompetency and neglect of his duty, that he resigned. But Davis, to whose stubborn refusal to accept advice some historians ascribe a large share of the responsibility for the downfall of the Confederacy, again flew in the face of public opinion, and immediately offered Benjamin his third cabinet position, that of secretary of state.

When Richmond fell in 1865, Benjamin fled with the rest of the Confederate government. Making his way to the coast of Florida he escaped in an open boat to the Bahamas, and in September, 1865, reached Liverpool. After living quietly in retirement for a year in England he took up the study of English law, and in 1866 he was admitted to the bar.

In 1868, after his health had failed, Benjamin retired from active practice, and on June 30 of that year he was guest of honor at a farewell banquet given to him in the Inner temple in London by the highest legal luminaries in England. He then went to Paris to make his home and there he died on May 8, 1884.

If Benjamin's career in America was a remarkable one, even more unusual was that of another immigrant boy, James E. Shields. Born in Dunganon, County Tyrone, Ireland, in 1810, Shields came to this country at the age of sixteen and went to the frontier country of Illinois, where he studied law and began practice at Kaskaskia in 1832. Honors came rapidly to him in his adopted home. He was elected to the legislature in 1836, made state auditor in 1839 and appointed a judge on the State Supreme court bench in 1843. Two years later he was appointed



Brig. Gen. James E. Shields

commissioner of the general land office, but gave up civil life at the outbreak of the Mexican war to accept a commission as brigadier general of the Illinois volunteers in 1846.

During that conflict Shields served under General Taylor on the Rio Grande, under General Wood in Chihuahua and during General Scott's campaign. He was shot through the lung at the Battle of Cerro Gordo and brevetted major general. After his recovery he served in the Valley of Mexico as commander of a brigade of marines, New York and South Carolina volunteers, only to be wounded severely again at the storming of Chapultepec. Mustered out of the service on July 20, 1848, he was immediately appointed territorial governor of Oregon, but resigned this office when he was elected senator from Illinois as a Democrat. He served in the senate from December 3, 1849, to March 3, 1855, and then moved to Minnesota.

When the state government was organized there he was again sent to the United States senate where he remained from May 12, 1858, to March 3, 1859. He next moved to California, and at the outbreak of the Civil war was acting as superintendent of a mine in Mexico. Hastening to Washington, the Mexican war veteran was commissioned a brigadier general of volunteers in August, 1861, and after the death of Gen. Fred W. Lander, Shields was placed at the head of his brigade. In 1862 he was head of a division of Gen. N. P. Banks' army, then operating in the Shenandoah valley of Virginia and the open campaign by inflicting a stinging defeat at Winchester upon "Stonewall" Jackson, who was just then beginning to make his bid for fame as the remarkable leader of "foot cavalry." Shields was wounded in this battle, receiving a broken arm from a fragment of shell.

On March 23, 1863, weakened by the wounds which he had suffered in two wars, Shields resigned from the army. Going to California he found that the lands granted to him for his military services had been lost by his trusted agent and he bought a farm near Carrollton, Mo., upon which to spend his declining years. Although he had decided to retire from public life, he was soon back into politics. In 1868 he was Democratic candidate for congress, and although his friends declared that he had been elected, he was not seated. Six years later they elected him to the legislature, and upon the expiration of his term, the general, aged, weakened and impoverished, sought the humble position of door-keeper of the United States senate in which he had represented two states. But this was denied him and he returned to Missouri. That state promptly honored him by electing him to the senate and he returned again as a member of the body which had denied him employment. He held this position until his death, which took place on June 1, 1870, at Ottumwa, Iowa, where he had gone to deliver a lecture on the Mexican war for the benefit of a church.

(© by Western Newspaper Union.)

Community Building

Up-to-Date Store Front an Asset to Merchant

"Clever and attractive arrangements of stores and store fronts is a decided inducement to the buying public and is being given careful attention by the progressive merchant when considering entering business of any nature," says a prominent Detroit merchant. "Scores of such changes have taken place in Detroit's downtown property in the last few years which resulted in surprisingly large increases in retail sales for the merchant.

"Property owners are aware of the fact that a small amount of money spent in altering and improving a building means an added income from rentals and greatly increases his chances for keeping the building regularly occupied. The comparatively low cost of all lines of building materials and the surplus of labor available this season offer property owners of out-of-date and rundown buildings the greatest opportunity in years to complete these needed improvements at a very low cost.

"It is expected that the larger building and improvement programs now maturing with the government, utilities and large industrial manufacturers will soon bring both labor and building material cost back to a normal basis of supply and demand."—Detroit News.

Touch of Naturalness in Use of Flagstones

Oftentimes we see an otherwise charming landscape or a beautiful garden and sense that something is missing. It seems to lack naturalness. Your landscape architect would spot the discord at once. He would probably suggest that you take out that artificial paving or flooring and substitute natural flagstone.

Nowadays we even have artificial sun lamps, yet there is no real substitute for natural sunshine in the scheme of nature. Nor will flagstone ever be improved upon for giving your garden, your grounds, your landscape that elusive naturalness without which the general scheme falls flat.

For the interior, too, where the keynote is a rustic atmosphere or rough finish, flagstones are in excellent taste. For fireplaces, sun parlors, vestibules, for porch floors, architects nowadays specify flagstone. Nature has been freed enough with her supplies of flagstone so that it is not a luxury.—Boston Herald.

Plants That Draw Birds

There are many plants which are especially attractive to birds. The planting of these may bring many varieties of birds to the home garden. Mulberry trees, because of their fruit, bring robins, catbirds, swallows, warblers, thrushes, orioles and scarlet tanagers to the yard. The fall fruit of the mountain ash tree appeals to robins and thrushes. Warblers are fond of larch trees because of the insects usually found on them, and elms attract orioles for nesting. Cedars protect many birds from stormy weather, and the small chipping sparrow always selects an arbor vitae or spruce in which to build a nest. All garden berry bushes, as well as grapes and viburnums, attract many species of birds.

Cutting Fire Loss

The evils of fire-inviting construction have received tremendous publicity of late. Our annual fire loss is estimated at \$500,000,000. Builders and owners are coming to realize that all construction should be truly fire resistant, whether built of wood fully protected or of incombustible material. The superiority of metal lath and plaster protection for wood studs and joints has been recognized for years through general knowledge of the material and successful stopping of fire in many buildings.—Chicago Post.

Hedge Possibilities

The trimmed hedge presents a formal architectural appearance, consequently it is used extensively in place of low or even high walls, to bound the outdoor living room and also along terraces and as an element in the makeup of a formal garden. The kind of plants used for hedges of this type varies with the locality and requirements as to height and density. Hedges are used in gardens as a boundary to the garden, or to bound flower beds, and to parallel walks or divide spaces purely as an ornamental feature.

Beautify Highways

Prizes are now presented by the Royal Automobile club for the most attractive service stations on roadsides in England. The Roads Beautifying association has arranged for trees to be planted along many roads. It is now interesting local authorities in giving opportunities for the planting of "remembrance trees," whether in memory or to commemorate a historic event.

Consider the Driveway

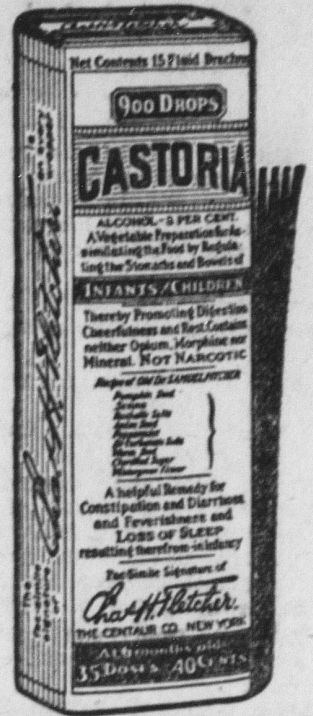
A neat and serviceable driveway to the garage should be considered in the general modernization plan for the exterior beautification of a home place, because the appearance of the garage and the approach to it are important features of the home picture.

When BABIES are upset

Baby ills and ailments seem twice as serious at night. A sudden cry may mean colic. Or a sudden attack of diarrhea—a condition it is always important to check quickly. How would you meet this emergency—tonight? Have you a bottle of Castoria ready? There is nothing that can take the place of this harmless but effective remedy for children; nothing that acts quite the same, or has quite the same comforting effect on them.

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tion always on hand. But don't keep it just for emergencies; let it be an everyday aid. Its gentle influence will ease and soothe the infant who cannot sleep. Its mild regulation will help an older child whose tongue is coated because of sluggish bowels. All druggists have Castoria; the genuine bears Chas. H. Fletcher's signature on the wrapper.



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Women in Sweden had a new thrill in the late winter in long-distance road trials over snow and ice. In one event four Swedes and an English woman competed. The Swedes were able to hold to the roads, but the outsider, after a few "ditchings," had a skid into a telegraph pole which put her machine out of use.

Blessing in Disguise

First Post—There's one nice thing about being a budding bard. Second Scribe—What's that, I want to know? First Post—No one expects you to grab for the check when lunching with friends.

Nugget of Wisdom

The mind is a bank that pays compound interest on the knowledge you deposit in it.

Was ever any wicked man free from the stings of a guilty conscience?—Thilston.

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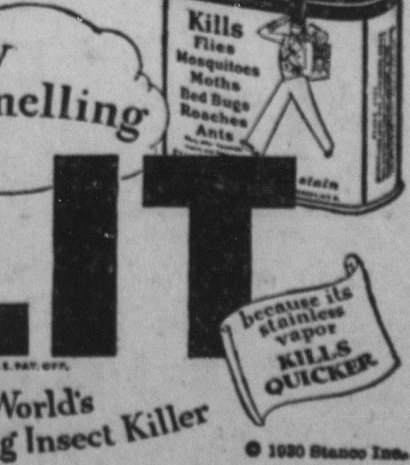
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