

OSCAR LITTLETON CHAPMAN

Oscar Littleton Chapman, nominated on January 5, 1950, to be Secretary of the Interior, was born in Omega, Virginia, October 22, 1896, the son of James Jackson Chapman and Rosa Archer (Blunt) Chapman. His early education was in the public schools of Virginia and at Randolph Macon Academy in Bedford, Virginia. In 1918, he left the Academy to enlist in the United States Navy, and served as pharmacist's mate until his discharge in 1920. During his service on hospital ships, he did transport duty to and from France, crossing the Atlantic Ocean 18 times during a period of 3 years.

At the end of the war, he was sent to Fort Lyon Hospital in Denver, Colorado, to recover from illness contracted while in the Navy. He entered the University of Denver on his recovery, and also studied law at the Westminster Law School where he was granted the LL.B. degree. In 1921, he became associated with Judge Ben B. Lindsey of the Juvenile Court of Denver, and later served for five years as assistant and chief probation officer of that court. While in that position, his interest in human affairs led to a specialized study of the social sciences, for one year, at the University of New Mexico. He took the bar examination in Denver and was admitted to practice in 1929.

Mr. Chapman was appointed Assistant Secretary of the Interior on May 4, 1933, the youngest member of the so-called Little Cabinet. He served almost 13 years in that position, a record believed to be unequalled in United States political history. He was appointed Under Secretary of the Interior by President Truman on March 27, 1946, after having served as Acting Secretary for a month during the interim between the resignation of Secretary Harold L. Ickes and the appointment of Secretary Julius A. Krug.

Mr. Chapman's adult life has been filled with activity in civic, political, and veterans' affairs, both in Denver and in Washington. He is a member of the Disabled American Veterans and the American Legion, and a charter member of Naval-Marine Post No. 101 in Denver. He served as chairman of the Legion's State Child Welfare Committee, Department of Colorado. From 1930 to 1936 he was president of the Colorado State Board of Control for the Boys' Industrial School. He is a member of the Democratic Club of Denver, and a former member of the Denver Kiwanis Club. He served as president of the Council of Religious Education for Colorado, was active in the YMCA, and held membership in St. Paul's Methodist Church.

Mr. Chapman's civic and humanitarian activities have continued on a similarly broad scale during his residence in Washington. He has been, for some time, a member of the Advisory Board of the National Training School for Boys, and has served on several occasions, at the request of the President, as head of the Government division of the Red Cross, Community Fund, and War Fund drives. He has been active also as a member of many civic committees dealing with questions of public welfare. He was executive secretary to the Public Works Board in 1933 and a member of the Committee on Race Relations

in the District of Columbia. He was appointed by the late President Roosevelt to the Interdepartmental Committee to coordinate Health and Welfare Services of the Government (1935); the Committee on Vocational Education (1936); and the Interdepartmental Committee to review charges of subversive activity against Federal employees.

He was a member of the United States delegation to the Inter-American Indian Congress in Mexico (1940); vice chairman of the Inter-American Conference on Conservation of Renewable Natural Resources in Denver (1948); deputy chairman of United States participants to the United Nations Scientific Conference on Conservation and Utilization of Resources in New York (1949); a member of the President's Advisory Committee on Management Improvement in Government; and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Foundation.

Oscar Chapman has received several citations for service to his country. On February 19, 1946, he was cited by the War Department for patriotic service in a position of trust and responsibility as Chairman of the Personnel Advisory Board, Office of the Provost Marshal General, from 1 January 1943 to 15 October 1943. On May 12, 1949, he received from B'nai B'rith, Argo-Independence Capitol Lodges No. 413, the Americanism Citation for Meritorious Service, in recognition of outstanding service in community and civic affairs for general advancement of Americanism and citizenship responsibility. In 1949, the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution presented to Mr. Chapman, as Secretary of the Interior, the Gold Medal of the Society upon the 160th anniversary of the ratification of the first ten amendments to the Constitution, the "Bill of Rights."

He has been awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws by Augustana College (1934); by the Colorado State College of Education (1940); and by Howard University (1949). Mr. Chapman is a member of the District of Columbia Bar, and was admitted to practice before the Supreme Court of the United States on May 7, 1934. He is a member of the American Judicature Society and of Phi Alpha Delta Law Fraternity. He has been twice married, first to Olga Pauline Edholm, who died in 1932, and second to Ann Kendrick, in 1940. He has one son, James Raleigh, born in 1944.

