

# Mock Convention Selects Vandenberg

By Bill Bien



Congressman Clarence Brown, '16  
Delivers Keynote Address

America's most successful and elaborate mock political convention last month took nine ballots to name Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg, of Michigan, as its Republican standard-bearer in the November elections.

Politicos and political observers from coast to coast followed the national political spotlight to Lexington April 20-21 as 1094 Washington and Lee University "Republican national convention delegates" jammed their campus "Convention Hall" (Doremus Gymnasium) for the university's ninth mock political convention since 1908.

Traditionally representing the challenging party, W. and L. conventions have seen their predictions verified five out of eight times. They had missed only once until 1936, when on the last ballot they deserted Alf Landon in favor of Vandenberg. Deciding to string along a second time with the senior Michigan senator, the "delegates" are waiting now with crossed fingers—hoping the nomination will not portend disaster for their candidate.

Newsreel and magazine cameramen shot thousands of feet of film during the sessions showing students toiling under the glare of powerful floodlights and flashbulbs to break an eighth-ballot Taft-Dewey deadlock in favor of darkhorse Vandenberg.

Meanwhile a crowded press gallery beat out thousands of words of news copy on batteries of typewriters, recording the serious aspects and playful sidelights of the meeting. Major newspapers in all parts of the country carried day-to-day reports of the balloting, in addition to wirephoto pictures sent directly from the campus by Associated Press.

Boasting an achievement record equalled by few, if any, political forecasters, the latest W. and L. convention drew a total unprecedented amount of national interest. Al Mingalone and George Bockhurst filmed the two-day event for Paramount and MGM Newsreels, while cameraman Tom McAvoy

and staff-writer Don Morris did detailed coverage for Time-Life. Associated Press sent Frank Fuller, chief of the Richmond Bureau, plus a wirephoto crew, and such prominent by-line political writers as Mary Spargo, the Washington Post, and Stanley Baitz, the Washington Star, kept telegraph wires humming out of Lexington with their stories.

United Press sent William Shires from Atlanta to the conclave, and many newspaper photographers busily captured students in action during the completely authentic Republican pollings.

With traditional devotion to accuracy, a student "steering committee" headed by Beverly Fitzpatrick, of Roanoke, Virginia, and Fred M. Vinson, Jr., of Washington, D.C., began working months before the convention opened. GOP "chairmen" for all 48 states and territories started gathering information from their real-life counterparts. They contacted their State Republican Central Committeemen during the university's spring vacation to assure accurate voting, and organized intensive pre-convention campaigns designed to boost their various candidates.

Toughest job on the committee agenda was finding an elephant—preferably with GOP experience—for the convention parade. After a frantic nationwide search, Lea Booth, Washington and Lee director of public relations, organized a safari and became the outstanding big-game hunter in the Old Dominion when he tracked down a pachyderm belonging to Dales Circus, then playing in Corbin, Kentucky. Circus owners agreed to let W. and L. use the animal and E. W. King, president of the Mason-Dixon Trucking Lines, donated a van to transport the elephant to Lexington in time for the pre-convention rally.

Thousands of people from the lower Shenandoah Valley packed Lexington's streets to witness the colorful parade. Traffic over U. S. Route 11 was detoured from the main street and uncounted hundreds of tourists parked to watch



West Virginia's Delegation  
in the Parade



what appeared to be a Roman holiday. The onlookers didn't seem to mind being splattered with oranges from the Florida delegation, flour and bread slices from the Minnesotans, and Baldwin apples tossed by Connecticut delegates pledged to Governor Baldwin.

A major attraction of the parade was a realistic coal miners' sit-down strike organized by "John L. Lewis" and staged in front of the Robert E. Lee Hotel.

The crowd applauded appreciatively when the California group passed, with attractive women pushing baby-carriages

under a banner proclaiming California as "Fastest Growing State in the Union." Behind them came the Missouri delegation leading an imitation Democratic donkey which faltered at frequent intervals while attempting to dance the "Missouri Waltz." Cameramen had a field day shooting such antics as the riot staged by the New York delegates, who stopped the parade to climb on the "Dewey Bandwagon," a Broadway and 42nd Street bus.

Representative Clarence J. Brown, '16, (R-Ohio) officially opened the two-day session in Doremus Gymnasium with a

keynote address, pointing out that "This convention will name the next President of the United States because the people are tired of Hybrid Henrys and High-tax Harrys."

First name placed on the nomination roster was Thomas E. Dewey, after a fiery nominating speech by Alex Andrews, New York "Delegate." Before the first day's meetings were adjourned he was joined by Taft, Stassen, Green, Vandenberg, Ed Martin, Joe Martin, Driscoll, MacArthur, Reese, and Baldwin.

To the accompaniment of exploding flashbulbs, steady whirring of movie cameras, and the unbroken clacking of typewriters, students cast ballot after ballot during the second day. Dewey and Taft rapidly outdistanced the field and moved into an anticipated deadlock.

Then, during the eighth polling, Pennsylvania's "Chairman," Dick Turrell, injected a new tenseness into the proceedings when he announced a shift of his 73 votes to Vandenberg. Delegates and spectators alike realized the time for a Vandenberg bid was at hand. Nothing else happened immediately, however, and the air of tenseness increased as Parliamentarian Claude Taylor took the votes from states alphabetically behind Pennsylvania. Tabulation of the eighth ballot showed Dewey still holding a comfortable lead of more than a hundred votes, Taft rapidly slipping into oblivion, and Vandenberg with approximately 300 votes—more than 200 shy of nomination.

As Secretary Jack Coulter called for the ninth round of balloting, several states passed until Kentucky yielded to Texas, and "State Chairman" Ben Haden, acting on telephoned instructions from GOP headquarters, dramatically switched his delegates' vote from Dewey to Vandenberg.

A mad scramble to clamber on the bandwagon threw the convention into a turmoil and when calm was restored, Vandenberg emerged with almost all of the delegates' 1094 votes to become Washington and Lee's choice for 1948 Republican Presidential nominee.

Only one additional ballot was needed to name Senator Leverett Saltonstall, of Massachusetts, as the W. and L. vice-presidential candidate.

Visitors observing the event enthusiastically endorsed Washington and Lee's claim of complete authenticity. Experienced political writers said that except for the youth of the "delegates," the convention was an exact replica of real national party gatherings, but "perhaps not as rough-house."

Just as in the actual Republican national conventions, W. and L. delegates held hurried secret caucuses during the meetings, and there was even some open vote trading on the floor. Lexington phone circuits were strained under long-distance calls at all hours by "state chairmen" obtaining instructions from real-life GOP committeemen as far away as California.

#### GRAHAM MORISON vs. JOHN L. LEWIS

Hugh Graham Morison, B.A., '30; LL.B., '32, now Assistant Attorney General of the U. S., in charge of the Justice Department's claims division, prepared the case in which Judge T. Alan Goldsborough slapped a fine of \$1,400,000 on John L. Lewis' union and a \$20,000 fine on Lewis himself for criminal contempt of court.

The claims division handles all civil litigation of the department except antitrust and tax matters. The diversified field of its 10 sections won it the name of the "Little Department of Justice."

Morison has served with the department as attorney, special assistant and executive assistant before being recommended by Attorney General Tom Clark for his present position.



Discussing the script of "Lee of Virginia," the du Pont Cavalcade of America broadcast on NBC April 26, are (left to right): Milton B. Rogers, '17, Virginia Radcliffe, author of the radio drama, Leo G. Carroll, noted stage and screen actor who played the part of General Lee, and John Drye, '20. The drama was produced at the Longacre Theatre in New York and broadcast over 136 NBC stations all over America as a tribute to General Lee's achievements as President of Washington College. Full information on this broadcast was sent by the Alumni Office a week in advance to all alumni.

#### VETERAN ALUMNUS REVISITS HIS ALMA MATER

Colonel Albert M. Deal, LL.B. '96, celebrated his eightieth birthday on January 2, 1948. Among the many presents bestowed upon him, perhaps the most unique and satisfying, was a surprise trip to Lexington, Virginia, to visit the scene of his college days at Washington and Lee, his first return to the campus since graduation. This trip was the gift of his son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. William Deal of La-Grange, Georgia. Possessed of a vibrant, forward-looking spirit not often associated with one of his years, he said that his purpose in returning to Lexington was not only to seek out the landmarks of his student days and experience the warm glow that wells from reminiscing on dear but long-forgotten friends and faculty members, but also to see for himself, and to rejoice over, the many evidences of progress and the brilliant future of service that lies ahead of one of the South's oldest and most distinguished colleges. Mr. Deal is a member of the law firm of Deal and Anderson of Statesboro, Georgia. He spent the day in visiting the administrative offices of the University and his class-mate and roommate, Benjamin F. Harlow, owner and editor of the Lexington Gazette. While a student here he was affectionately known as "Square Deal," which has been an apt appraisal of his career in after life.

#### ALUMNUS RECEIVES PULITZER PRIZE

Listed among the recent recipients of Pulitzer prizes for 1947 is the name of George E. Goodwin, B.A., '39, staff writer of the Atlanta, Georgia, Journal, who won the prize for a distinguished example of local reporting in 1947. It was for his expose of vote fraud in Telfair County, Georgia, in the general election of November 5, 1946.