



Bob Palmer in the Springfield (Mo.) News and Leader.

His Honor E. L. Anderson, B.S. in C.E.

'12

"A man must try to do the best he can. He may be right or he may be wrong—but if he has acted in good conscience, using his best judgment, he can't afford to worry." That's the philosophy which Elmer Lee "Andy" Anderson, B.S. in C.E. '12, has developed during a long and not always easy lifetime—as an Illinois farm boy, in front line service during World War I, and during 45 years of railroading—all of which serve him well in his newest job as mayor of Springfield, Missouri.

As a city councilman since February, 1960, Mayor Anderson has become acquainted with the problems and pitfalls of volunteer public service. Under Springfield's council-manager form of government, council members and the mayor whom they elect are volun-

teer workers, receiving no salary. When asked in a recent interview how he felt about criticism which attaches to many of the decisions which a council must make, Mayor Anderson replied that "a person who entirely avoids criticism is one who does nothing."

An editorial in the Springfield Leader and Press stated: "Mayor E. L. Anderson has reluctantly accepted the leadership of Springfield's City Council in troubled times. He is able, conscientious, intelligent and of even temperament, unlikely to be unduly disturbed by the complaints and criticism which in our town sometimes seem to be the only reward for public service."

Mr. Anderson was born 73 years ago at Hull, Illinois, a rural community in an area pioneered by his family whose members came from West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. He attended high school at LaBelle, Missouri, and there became interested in mathematics and the related sciences. Combined with an early interest in building, this led him to choose a career in civil engineering. He helped finance his education at M. U. by doing odd jobs and by serving as a "problem reader" (in engineering, an assistant to the professor) during his senior year. His first job, in June, 1912, was with a federal government land survey in northwestern Montana, but he got a job as rodman with the Frisco railroad that same year and went to Springfield in December. Three years later, he became assistant engineer for the district which included Missouri, Arkansas, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama. There followed two years of Army service with a pioneer regiment of engineers. When the Armistice came, he was in training in an officer candidate school in France.

After the war, Mr. Anderson returned to Springfield to his position as assistant district engineer with Frisco. There followed assignments as roadmaster at Chaffee and Poplar Bluff, Missouri, from 1931 to 1937, when he returned to Springfield as division engineer. Subsequently he served as assistant to the general manager, assistant to

the chief engineer, chief engineer, and assistant to the vice-president of operations—all system-wide Frisco appointments. During his service as chief engineer, the \$11 million Tennessee yards at Memphis were built, and the \$6 million Cherokee yards at Tulsa were designed and construction begun.

Mr. Anderson retired from the railroad in March, 1958. One year later, in March of 1959, he was the recipient of an honor award from the University of Missouri for distinguished service in engineering. Mayor Anderson is optimistic for the future of railroads—"The picture is not as dark as many paint it. The railroads are a transportation system which will be with us for many, many years to come. There is no way in the world that you can furnish transportation as cheaply and as safely as with cars rolling down a steel rail."

Mr. Anderson was married in 1920 to the former Ethel Simmons of Buffalo, Missouri. They have two sons, E. L. Anderson, Jr., and James Anderson, both of Springfield; and two grandchildren, Jimmie, 6, and April, 3 (James' children), whose pictures their grandparents display with pride. Mayor Anderson is active in numerous professional organizations—the Missouri Society of Professional Engineers and its Ozark chapter in Springfield, the American Society of Civil Engineers, the American Railway Engineering Association, the Roadmasters and Maintenance of Way Association of America—and in two Springfield civic clubs, Downtown Kiwanis and the University Club.

Books and maps in the pleasant Anderson home at 1040 East Grand in Springfield are evidence of the mayor's hobbies—reading and geography. He continues to study professional journals, and terms this his "educational" reading. For recreation, he turns to the Saturday Evening Post and U. S. News and World Report. The Andersons have a cottage at Rockaway Beach (near Springfield) where they go frequently for relaxation—"Mrs. Anderson is the fisherman," says the mayor. "I just go along to bait the hook."