

# Students At Top Of World Get Flag Made In Rock Hill

There's a mighty good chance a group of sixth graders in Barrow, right up at the top of the world, will be the first Alaskans to own a new American flag with its 49 stars.

The flag is already on its way from Rock Hill to the little town on Point Barrow, the northernmost tip of the United States.

An Associated Press Wirephoto from the Rock Hill Evening Herald played a big part in getting it started on its way.

Others with leading roles in the "first flag to Alaska" drama were the Providence, R.I., Sunday Journal; a Coventry, Conn., school teacher; sixth grade "pen pals" in Coventry and Barrow, and William H. Grier, executive vice president of Rock Hill Printing and Finishing Co.

The Herald's picture of the first new American flags coming off the printing machines at the huge textile plant appeared in the Providence paper on Sunday after it was distributed on the AP Wirephoto network.

Mrs. Gertrude Guilford, a sixth grade teacher in Coventry, was particularly interested because her students had been exchanging "pen pal" letters with sixth graders in Barrow.

She wrote Rock Hill Printing and Finishing Co.:

"The Associated Press Wirephoto print in the Providence, R. I., Sunday Journal yesterday was of keen interest to me, and this morning my sixth grade pupils used it as a base for the current event discussion. We are now mailing the picture along with our pen pal letters to Mrs. Ollie Turner (teacher of sixth grade) and her pupils (little Eskimos) in Barrow, Alaska."

She asked the cost of the flag with the 49 stars "because we have promised the little Eskimos... we will send them a U.S. flag with 49 stars as soon as they are available."

Mrs. Guilford's letter was one of hundreds pouring into the plant from all parts of the United States following publication of the picture. They were from schools, newspapers, display companies, patriotic organizations, promotion firms, individuals wanting information on availability, prices, process used and other details.

Policy at the plant calls for such letters to be acknowledged and then referred to the parent company, M. Lowenstein & Sons Inc., in New York. The acknowledgements explain Rock Hill Printing and Finishing Co., does not sell or distribute flags and other goods but only prints them to fill orders of the parent company.

Policy or not, Mrs. Guilford's



Herald Newsmap Shows Barrow At Top Of World

letter received special treatment. It went to the desk of Grier, who heads printing and finishing operations for Lowenstein. Along with it went a letter Mrs. Guilford had enclosed from Annie Hopson, a Barrow sixth grader. Neatly written on notebook paper, the little girl's letter said in part:

"I have five sisters. . . I have eight brothers. One went to high school and one went to work on the DEW (Distant Early Warning) Lines.

"When Alaska became a state they went down to the ice and dug holes for the dynamites. And they put 49 dynamites in the holes and lighted the dynamites. The C.A.S. boys and Mr. Erskins (she didn't identify them further), ran off and the dynamites just went up. When they were all finished with the dynamites the soldiers came and shot about 49 times and they held the flags up.

"In Barrow we don't live in igloos. Long time ago they lived in sod houses. . .

"There are about 12 stores in Barrow. Paul's Store, Mary's Shop, Don's Place, May's Shop, Tommey Brower's two stores, Gladves' Store, Dance Hall, Willie's Store, Edna's Store, Eddie's Store and the Eskimo Native Store. . .

She told of the town's three churches — Presbyterian, Catholic and Assembly of God — and the two school buildings — the old and the new. She said she attends the Presbyterian Church and the old school building. (Mrs. Guilford's uncle, a Dr. Griest, was a Presbyterian missionary to Barrow in the 1920s.)

Barrow has two theaters, Annie wrote, and she attends both. "They show real good films," she added.

Then, unconsciously understoring the role the little town on the windswept, treeless tundra on the Arctic Ocean plays in the nation's

defenses, the school girl closed her letter with this bit of information:

"There are many jeeps and weasels here. I have ridden on a jeep, tractor and a weasel."

When Grier had finished the letters from Mrs. Guilford and Annie, he picked up his telephone and dialed the plant's packing department.

"Pack one American flag for mailing to the Top of the World," he said, "addressed to Sixth Grade Students, Attention Mrs. Turner, Barrow, Alaska."

Turning to his secretary, he added:

"Write Mrs. Guilford that a flag has been sent to the sixth grade students in Barrow."



Here's Where — W. H. Grier Points To Barrow, Alaska

## Letters From All Over The Nation Prove Americans Deeply Interested In New Flag

Americans are intensely interested in their new flag.

To prove it, they flooded one of the first firms to go into production of the 49-star banner with hundreds upon hundreds of letters and post cards.

And the mail is still pouring in at the Rock Hill Printing and Finishing Co.

It comes from every section of the U. S. — from a 13-year-old student in Winston-Salem, N. C., requesting a flag for his collection . . . from a youngster in Providence, R. I., wanting the first new flag in the city . . . from a Miami,

Fla., dealer seeking a supply for direct sales . . . from schools, newspapers, patriotic organizations, promotion firms, housewives.

A woman in Greenwich, Conn., asks for two stars to add to her present flag (one for each side), and as an afterthought requests two more so that she might add them when Hawaii is admitted.

A teenager in Newport News, Va., inquires whether the stars on his present flag can be reprinted.

The correspondents ask for information about the new flags: their availability, prices, sizes, the

process used in printing them.

William H. Grier, executive vice president of the huge Rock Hill bleachery, personally acknowledges each inquiry.

Regretfully, he replies that the bleachery does not sell or distribute flags, but only prints them to fill the orders of the bleachery's parent company, M. Lowenstein & Sons of New York.

He tells the writers their requests will be forwarded to the New York offices and that Lowenstein will advise them of the customers distributing the new flags.

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