

Topeka, Kansas, Thursday Evening, January 26, 1967



—Staff Photo

Miss Betty Royon of Cleveland, Ohio, (center) chief assistant to the chairman of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway, visited with her hostess, Mrs. Evan C. Lewis, (right) and Mrs. Robert Londerholm

at a party given Wednesday night by Mrs. Lewis in her home. Miss Royon spoke at the 55th annual meeting of the Kansas Council of Women Thursday morning at the Hotel Jayhawk.

International Field Is Her Specialty

By KATHIE DONNELLY

International relations is a subject that most women know little about and even fewer women are actively involved with internationally known figures.

One of the most actively involved women in the country, outside perhaps, of government employes, is Betty Royon of Cleveland, a special assistant to the internationally-known industrialist, Cyrus Eaton.

Miss Royon, in Topeka as the house guest of the Evan Lewises, spoke Thursday on international relations at the morning session of the Kansas Council of Women at the Jayhawk Hotel.

A native Clevelander, Miss Royon's actual title is staff assistant to Eaton in his role as chairman of the board of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad Company.

The energetic Ohioan was born and reared in the Cleveland

area, but she had turned down a job with Eaton, a family friend, on graduating from college, preferring to strike out on her own.

Nuclear Physics

At Smith College in Northampton, Mass., she majored in nuclear physics and received both her bachelor's and master's degrees in that field. Even in such a difficult subject, Miss Royer made Phi Beta Kappa in her junior year.

After graduating in the middle

of the depression years, she had difficulty finding a job.

"I had decided I didn't want to teach or to get my Ph.D., so I took a summer off and went back home and learned how to take shorthand and type, which is some gratuitous advice I offer to all college graduates," she said.

After a brief job with an insurance company, filling out policies and anything else that came along, Miss Royon went to New York.

"I got a job in a New York investment counsel firm that wanted someone who could write about the application of the new scientific discoveries to business and industry and that sort of wrapped up everything I'd had," she explained, "since I'd always been interested in math and science and also in business and in journalism."

Then Eaton, who has always been her mentor and guide, asked her to take a job with his New York offices as a writer and researcher.

Helps With Farm

During the war, she transferred to Eaton's Cleveland office. In addition to her duties with the railroad, she is the vice president of Eaton's Acadia Farms in Northfield, Ohio, and of Deep Cove Farm, in Upper Blandford, Nova Scotia.

Miss Royon, with Eaton and the farm's operating manager, buy and sell cattle and plan

the breeding program. The farms have pure bred and registered beef Shorthorn breeding cattle.

She pointed proudly to the fact that Acadia, this year, has the International grand champion Shorthorn bull. She has become an authority on cattle breeding since working with Eaton and is editor of the Shorthorn Newsletter and permanent secretary of the state Shorthorn Assn.

But it's in international relations that much of her work is done. Back in 1954, Eaton turned his boyhood home, Pugwash, Nova Scotia, into "a retreat for scientists, scholars and people from all fields, so they could go there, sit down together, exchange ideas and sharpen their own ideas," Miss Royon explained.

This was the start of the annual Pugwash conferences, concentrating each year on a different area of the world. It is Miss Royon's job to organize the conferences, in collaboration with the groups which are co-sponsoring them.

"This is really a fringe benefit for me," she explained, adding that she gets to read all the advance material on the conferences, usually attends and writes reports on them.

"It's a good way to get the cobwebs out of the brain," she laughed.

Understanding Needed

"If you're interested in something, you're going to learn all there is to know about it," she said, "and you learn something new everyday."

Though Eaton has often been criticized for his philosophies, especially regarding the Socialist countries, Miss Royon has a ready answer for his critics.

"I believe myself that there must be some way to reach understanding with people of opposite views," she said. "There just has to be. After all, there are three nations that have the ability to destroy each other with nuclear power.

"And in all the time I've been associated with Mr. Eaton, there has never been any time when I couldn't disagree and express my disagreement with him," she explained.

"We are expected to say what we think. There's no bonus for 'yes men' in that organization. It's a challenge every day to use whatever native wits you have."

One thing is sure, there's no time in Miss Royon's life that she has to sit down and worry about finding something to do next. Her tight schedule, between railroad work, organizing the Pugwash Conference, farm business and attending livestock shows, leaves her barely enough time to catch her breath between engagements. But she's one woman who seems to thrive on it.