

F. B. I.'S NO. 3 MAN BACK IN CIVIL LIFE

**L. B. Nichols Retires at 51
After 23 Years in Service
—His Plans Are Prosaic**

By **LUTHER A. HUSTON**

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 1—A big, handsome man gave up today a job that millions of American youngsters dream about. It is going to be difficult for them to understand why anyone should quit being a top G-man.

Nevertheless, this was the last day for Louis Burrous Nichols as a member of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

He retired as the No. 3 G-man, above him in the F.B.I. being only J. Edgar Hoover, director, and Clyde A. Tolson, associate director. His title was assistant director.

Mr. Nichols is 51 years old. The F.B.I. law permits retirement at the age 50 after twenty years of service and he was in his twenty-fourth year of service.

Difficult Decision

He said today that the decision to retire was harder than any other he had faced since he joined the F. B. I. on July 30, 1934. He wasn't sure that the full impact of the decision had yet hit him and thought it probable that in retirement he might hear of some tough case the F. B. I. was handling and call up to offer his help.

One thing he is taking with him in retirement is the gold badge he has worn as assistant director of the bureau. That also is a possession multitudes of American youngsters would cherish. Mr. Hoover had the badge mounted on a hard-wood plaque and presented it to his retiring colleague, presenting to him also a leather case to hold the memento.

Mr. Nichols spent most of his last day in office bidding goodbye to associates. At 5:30 P. M. he turned the office over to his successor, Gordon A. Nease.

One thing he will do in retirement, Mr. Nichols said today, is "activate," with the enthusiastic assistance of Mrs. Nichols, a 156-acre farm he owns near Leesburg, Va. He will establish there a holly orchard. More than 1,000 small holly trees are under cultivation in the garden of their home in near-by Alexandria and will be transplanted. A rototiller, one of the retirement gifts he received from associates, will be useful in these operations.

Plans to Do Some Fishing

The immediate plans of Mr. Nichols are to visit relatives in Indiana and Alabama and go fishing with a retired doctor friend in Louisiana. After a time he will turn to a choice of several job offers he has from private industry.

Mr. Nichols was born in Decatur, Ill., lived on an Ohio farm for a while and then moved with his family to Michigan.

He was graduated from Kalamazoo College in Michigan in 1930, then came to Washington to study law at George Washington University Law School. He obtained his law degree in 1934, about a month before he joined the F. B. I.

After a brief period as a field man he was brought into F. B. I. headquarters and remained there. He was a supervisor assigned to headquarters for a number of years. He became assistant director in 1941 and assistant to the director in 1951.

His duties as assistant to the director included the handling of press relations for the F.B.I. The F.B.I. is reticent about its operations and Mr. Nichols betrayed no secrets, but he became helpful to the Washington newspaper corps and highly regarded by its members.

Mr. Nichols was married to the former Carroll Stevens in 1934. They have two sons, John Edgar, 18, named after the F.B.I. director, and Louis Stevens, 13.



Camera Press Pix

LEAVES F. B. I.: Louis B. Nichols, who retired yesterday as assistant to the director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.