

## FOUR “A” STATES

When I was Miss **ALABAMA**, living in Montgomery, I had an itch to travel - alphabetically. By the way, did you know that George Washington Carver hailed from there and, believe or not, discovered over 200 uses for peanuts!

I took off on a flight to way up north to **ALASKA**. Juneau is the only state capital you need a boat or a plane to get to. **ALASKA** is also the largest state in the US I thought it was awesome, but couldn't stand the cold.

Made a bold move, packed up and board a plane, destination, **ARIZONA**. There I took a helicopter tour of Phoenix. The Grand Canyon was fine, but that heat was not mine. Back to the South went this wandering child.

Next stop, **ARKANSAS** where the first diamond mine was found. Wish I was around then. This state was purchased from Russia in 1867. I trekked through their famous Ozark Mountains. While on a bus in Little Rock, I got a glimpse of the Hollywood sign on TV and it was -

## THREE “C” STATES

“**CALIFORNIA** here I come.” Did you know that the oldest bristlecone pine trees can be found there? I went to Sacramento, but headed out for

Los Angeles, which I thought should be the capital. L.A was certainly the fun town. On the beach I met an old friend, a “fox.” We drank up the sun and had a great time.

Then he met flighty Sally on her way to Denver, **COLORADO**, to study grass. “Hey, let's join her!” my friend cried. “No,” said I as I passed him by. He shrugged as he joined *me* on my wanderlust.

Soon we found ourselves jetting off to Hartford, **CONNECTICUT**. He insisted on checking out the country's oldest Museum, the Wadsworth Athenaeum, where he stumbled and fell.

## ONE “D” STATE

I took off alone for **DELAWARE**. I found out that the first log cabin in North America was built there in 1683. While wandering through Dover, I learnt that Delaware wanted to secede from the Union but decided against it in 1861.

## ONE “F” STATE

Then to languid **FLORIDA**, called the retiring State where the crocodiles and the alligators play. I liked Miami, thought it was their capital, found out it was Tallahassee. My only drawback was seeing so many seniors sprawled out on the beach - just too much for me.

## ONE “G” STATES

I went on to sweet **GEORGIA**, the birthplace of the Girl's Scout, with its swinging capital of Atlanta. There, I met up with an old girlfriend. We met two handsome peaches but they turned out quite dull.

### ONE "H" STATES

We flew to Honolulu, **HAWAII**, the only State with a royal palace and the last State to join the Union in 1959. We enjoyed the beaches, ate sweet sugar cane and pineapple too. While there, my girlfriend decided to stay but I had a yen for Irish potatoes.

### FOUR "I" STATES

I knew there was no place like **IDAHO** to satisfy my potato craving. Stopped in Boise, went into a restaurant and asked for the largest potato they had. Was I sorry, it was the size of a watermelon! After satisfying my crave, it was bye, bye, Idaho.

Riddle me this, riddle me that, how many "I" States in the U.S of A?

Four to be sure and I have one, so I'll need three more to settle the score.

I went on by train to Springfield, **ILLINOIS**. Visited then Chicago where I was informed that the first tallest building in the U.S was found there, also a man was caught dancing with his wife!

From there to **INDIANA** I went. Stopped in Indianapolis, I was day too late to see the race of

the year - the Indy 500. Was so mad, I took off immediately.

Ended up in the last "I" state, **IOWA**, with Des Moines, its capital, located on the top of a hill. There I clicked my heels. Guess where I landed?

### TWO "K" STATES

Good old Topeka, **KANSAS**, where helium was discovered in 1905. There I bought a beautiful wide-brimmed hat for a special event in the next state I would visit. Can you tell which one?

You guessed it! Yes, I wore my fancy hat to the Kentucky Derby in Louisville, **KENTUCKY**. I thought it was the capital but I was wrong, again. Frankfort is the capital of Kentucky. Anyway I lost a bundle, just wasn't my lucky day.

### ONE "L" STATE

I jetted on to the Pelican state of **LOUISIANA**, so called, because the State bird is the brown pelican. Made a quick stop in Baton Rouge. Although Baton Rouge is the capital, the largest city is New Orleans, one of the first cities to celebrate Mardi Gras.

### EIGHT "M" STATES

Continued my journey to Augusta, **MAINE**. Found out that Main was part of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. This State seceded in 1820 to

become the 23rd state of the Union. Had some succulent lobsters in Kennebunkport but the cold chased me away.

I next stopped in **MARYLAND**. Oh, my second capital city mistake. I thought it was Baltimore, instead of Annapolis. Bet you didn't know that the first umbrella was made there!

Boston, **MASSACHUSETTS** was my next stop. Had a great time at Paul Revere's house. Remember him? "The British are coming. The British are coming!" Having been called a witch, I wasn't too happy about the story of what they did to some witches there so I hurried along -

To Lansing, **MICHIGAN**, the wolverine state. May be right for the wolves, but much too cold for me. No wonder so much cereal was produced there - must be to keep the citizens warm.

**MINNESOTA** called me, could not resist, but only stopped for a moment in St. Paul. I heard that the oldest rock in the world was found in the Minnesota River valley. I wonder if that's true!

Continued on to Jackson, **MISSISSIPPI**, the magnolia state, there I reveled for a moment in her beauty. Slavery marred that lovely State. The slaves were brought over from Africa. Even after they were freed, there treatment was nothing to be proud of and in some areas the injustice continues today.

**MISSOURI** the "show me" state beckoned to me. There I saw the good old Civil War Museum. Jefferson City, was named after the third President of the United States, Thomas Jefferson.

We're now at the halfway point of the States.

Must pick up the pace and carry on to **MONTANA**. Loved, Helena located in Lewis and Clark County.

## EIGHT "N" STATES

Trekked on to Lincoln, **NEBRASKA**, and visited the University of Nebraska. Learned of Nebraska's rough past - The government forcing the Indians to give up their land and live on the reservation.

Went to **NEVADA**, Carson City. Then on to Reno. Wrong move. Didn't learn from what I did in Kentucky. I was almost financially ruined.

Took the first flight out to **NEW HAMPSHIRE**, there I saw the Cornish-Windsor bridge, the longest wooden bridge built in 1866. The wine in Concord was the best.

Before I knew it, I was out West in Trenton, **NEW JERSEY**. The Dutch claimed New Jersey from the Indians. Didn't like it there, I got away in a hurry.

Needed some warmth, so off to Santa Fe, **NEW MEXICO**. I took the train. Wrong move. Don't want to talk about it.

Had to make it back to Albany, **NEW YORK**. New York City is the most populated city in the U.S. I think it should have been the capital. Did you know that the Dutch were the first Europeans to settle there? Also people there love to ride around in a hole in the ground.

“I’m coming; I’m coming;” that was my answer to the call from Raleigh, **NORTH CAROLINA**, famous for its oak trees.

Bustle off to Bismarck, **NORTH DAKOTA**. Had a g-o-o-d time there but had to bustle on to -

### **THREE “O” STATES**

**OHIO**. Did you know that its capital, Columbus, was named after the famous Italian explorer, Christopher Columbus?

Hurried southward to **OKLAHOMA**, stopped in Oklahoma City looking for Oklahoma Kitty. No trace of her anywhere.

So I continued westward, destination **OREGON**. Not happy there, especially in Salem, still haunted by the memory of what happened to witches in Salem, Mass. Jetted out of there to -

### **ONE “P” STATE**

Harrisburg, **PENNSYLVANIA**. One of the founding states of the Union, and the second to ratify the

U.S. Constitution.

### **ONE “R” STATE**

Then I hopped on a train to Providence, **RHODE ISLAND**, the first of the 13 State to cut ties with England! It was one of the colonies that had a thriving trade with Africa in molasses, slaves and rum. Enough of that must get back to my South.

### **TWO “S” STATE**

Hey, **SOUTH CAROLINA**, here I come on another chu chu train. Columbia, its capital once voted as one of the best places to retire. Not yet for me.

Midwest, I’m back! A quick stopover in Pierre, **SOUTH DAKOTA** – hnn, hnn, hnn, got to leave, too cold to stay. No wonder the world’s largest warm water pool is found there.

### **TWO “T” STATES**

I shouted, “**TENNESSEE**, are you ready for me to kick up my heels in your capital city?” Yes sir, Nashville lived up to its fame.

So sad I was when I had to leave for **TEXAS**. The music in Austin was quite a surprise. Got a little tipsy there and hitched a ride.

### **ONE “U” STATE**

Ended up out West in icy **UTAH**, famous for the Rainbow Bridge. It is the largest natural stone bridge in the world. I met a group on their way to Salt Lake City for some serious skiing. They asked me to join them; “Oh no,” said I, thinking again of the weather.

## **TWO “V” STATES**

Headed northeast to good old **VERMONT**. I bet you didn't know that Montpelier is the smallest capital city in the U.S.! Just can't get away from the cold, had to head out. On the bus out of town, I heard someone humming “Carry Me Home to Old Virginy.”

Richmond, **VIRGINIA!** As far as I know, the old state song of Virginia, was replaced with “Our Great Virginia.” The State was named in honor of Elizabeth the First of England, known as the “Virgin Queen.” Anyway after some sight-seeing in Richmond, I hurried on.

## **FOUR “W” STATES**

My next alphabetical State, of course, is that of **WASHINGTON**. Olympia is the capital even though the largest city is Seattle. There I hoped I'd be lucky to run into a friend. Wasn't my lucky night, so I left without a fight.

Made it back to Charleston, **WEST VIRGINIA**. Unfortunately I could not get to Harper's Ferry, an

important place in the Civil War. Well, my long, lovely, journey (apart from some cold spots) is nearing its end.

**WISCONSIN**, you are next to last! Went to Madison to sample some cheese. If you're a lover of cheese and a little beer, that's the place you want to be.

Oh, my last state, **WYOMING**. Now I can put my feet up. My journey has ended - Dear Cheyenne, I must tell you that the bison in the center of your State Flag still haunts me.

Fifty states mentioned but don't be too sure  
Puerto Rico and Washington DC  
might just be two more.

Catherine M. Cummings

## **ALPHABETICAL TRAVEL THROUGH THE USA**

A writer dreams to taking an unusual tour of the United states and would like to take you with her.. So, why not, use your imagination and take off with her.

