

To Mark 300th Year of Boston Common

Pageant Next Summer to Depict Historic Events.

Boston.—Saved from modern road builders and street wideners only by the high-powered indignation of the Boston Common society, the tercentenary of fifty acres of cowpaths, lawns and shrubbery, un-crossed by rapid transit line or highway, will be celebrated next summer.

Of course, thousands of persons are inconvenienced each day because of the disinclination of Boston antiquarians to let go another foot of land from the Common for needed street widenings or permit the building of roads across it, but other thousands revere it for its place in American history and the breathing space it affords in the heart of downtown Boston.

For this reason, a committee is now raising a fund, tentatively placed at \$300,000, to reconstruct the scenes and homes of vanished days, the duels, ducking stools and hangings, during the 1935 celebration of its three hundredth anniversary.

As It Was 300 Years Ago.
With the help of the Emergency Relief administration, the committee, headed by Everett B. Mero, hopes to draw from the past a representation of three hundred years of history—to show the plot as it was when Quakers and pirates dangled from its elms, as it was when young Woodbridge and his rival dueled at forty paces for the favors of a Boston belle.

The committee, if sufficient funds are raised, hopes to reproduce the Common's ducking stool; show the smoker's circle where "henpecked" devotees of nicotine repaired when driven from the home; reproduce the spinning bee of 1753 when young ladies revealed their matronly traits for the edification of their swains. The anti-slavery meeting of the '50s, Earl Percy and his Redcoats before the Revolution; William Blaxton (or Blackstone), Boston's first settler who sold his land, now the Common, to a community which he found too crowded and moved to Rhode Island; Beacon street "when respectability stalked unchecked"; the coming of the railroad in 1830; the water celebration in 1848, when a public system was first installed; the arrival of Lafayette on the Common, June 17, 1825, when he came to attend the Bunker Hill exercises;

Metoposaurus Is Back After 140,000,000 Years

Berkeley, Calif.—After an absence of some 140,000,000 years the metoposaurus has returned—but he isn't his old self.

In fact, the miniature amphibian in the University of California Museum of Paleontology is only a clay model of the extinct creature, which, scientists say, was a distant relative of the present-day salamander.

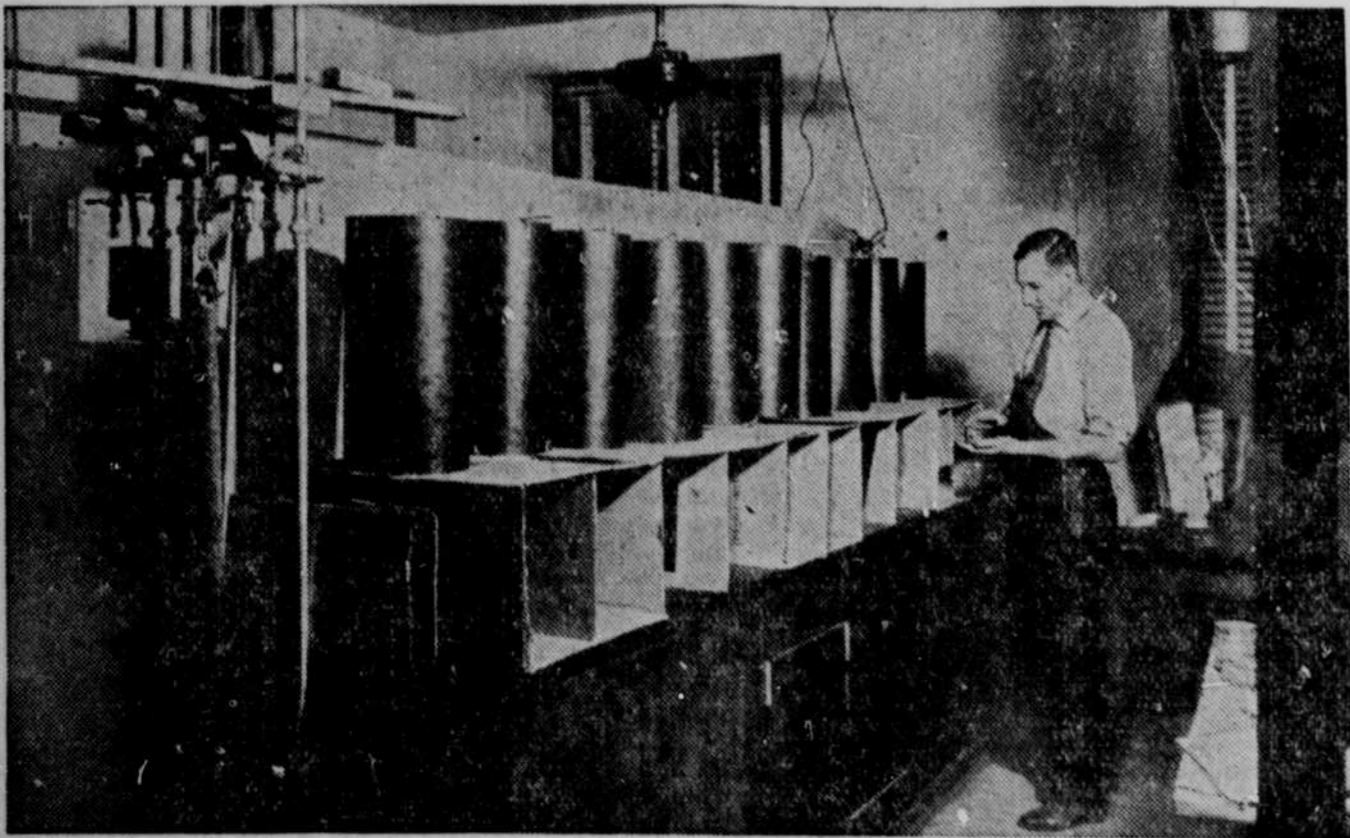
The model was constructed by sculptors, Adele Stackpole and Audrey Horn. It was modeled from a skull and other skeleton remains dug up in the Painted Desert of Arizona recently. Paleontologists estimated from the fossil remains that the metoposaurus was about eight to ten feet long.

Lake Erie Is Prolific Source of Peat Moss

Sandusky, Ohio.—What has been identified as "peat moss" has been coming from Lake Erie recently in large quantities. Its source is a mystery. Never until this year has there been more than a little of it. Now tons are available.

The moss, when bleached and treated, may be used in beautifying rock gardens. It commands high prices.

Uses "Rainbow" to Speed Seed Germination



Dr. Lewis H. Flint of the Department of Agriculture is pictured in the "rainbow room" of his laboratory where colored lights bring "dead" lettuce seeds back to life. Seeds which fail to grow under ordinary conditions will germinate in 24 hours if soaked for an hour or so and then exposed for a few seconds to sunlight or the proper kind of artificial light. His discovery will save millions of dollars to growers throughout the country.

Finds Men Prefer Their Co-eds Dumb

Evanston, Ill.—Co-eds of Northwestern university were accused of making low scholastic grades to attract the men.

Prof. John J. B. Morgan, of the psychology department, said girl students "proceed on the theory that men like them dumb."

He suggested that men submit the co-eds to intelligence tests before dating them.

"If they were required by prospective escorts to establish high intelligence quotients before dates, the university's scholastic record would soar like a rocket," Professor Morgan added.

Largest Prime Number

Chicago.—Dr. Samuel I. Krieger wore out six pencils, used 72 sheets of legal size note paper and frazzled his nerves quite badly but he was able to announce that 231,584,178,474,632,390,847,141,970,017,375,815,706,539,969,331,281,128,978,915,826,250,279,871 is the largest known prime number.

A prime number is any figure divisible only by itself or 1.

Old Alphabet Aid to Language Study

Canaan Cuneiform Writing Important Discovery.

New Haven, Conn.—Discovery of a hitherto unknown prebiblical Semitic language, revealing the source of the ancient and modern alphabets and offering a new key to controversial passages in the Bible, was announced by Dr. Julian J. Obermann, visiting professor of Semitic languages at Yale.

Cuneiform tablets, found at Ras Shamra, near Antioch, in northern Syria, disclosed the language of Canaan, and, according to Doctor Obermann, "are written in a new

alphabet that proves to be the oldest known."

He termed the find "an epoch-making discovery in the field of Semitic antiquities and the most important find since the Babylonian cuneiforms have come to light."

The tablets, he said, were inscribed during or before the Fifteenth century, B. C., and offer a previously unknown link between techniques of cuneiform and the principles of alphabetic script. The Ras Shamra tablets, he said, although written in cuneiform characters, employ only 30 signs, using them as alphabetic letters, whereas other systems known consisted of hundreds of signs representing syllables of ideogram.

The new Semitic dialect of Ras Shamra, promise to throw light on the evolution of the letters common to ancient and modern alphabets, revealing how the various letters came to have their individual shape, and how they came to be arranged in their traditional order.

As a result of the discovery, he said, Biblical literature and antiquities will be better understood.

Neither the language nor script was understood when the tablets first were found by an archeological expedition of the French Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres, he said. The decipherment was by French and German scholars, "opening a door to the understanding of Semitic lore and civilization which scholars only a few years ago did not know existed."

surprise comes when you put it on, for there are more ways of wearing the hat than the five squares of which it is made.

Recently a whole bridal party appeared wearing these hats. The bridesmaid, in a silver and pale blue lace frock, wore a matching hat of the lace. The maid of honor's dress and hat were in deep blue and silver lace. The bride's mother, in black and silver lace, wore the very black lace hat from which these sketches were made.

The fun of it is that one can take a half dozen such hats on a week-end and have a matching or contrasting one for every occasion. A novice can make one in no time at all. As for the cost, three hats can be made from one yard of lace.

Gold in Chicken's Claw

Sitka, Alaska.—Millions of dollars' worth of gold has been shipped from Alaska to Seattle. Some of it apparently is going back. As Mrs. Josephine Brojack dressed a chicken shipped from Seattle, she found in its claw a gold nugget worth \$2.50.

SEEN and HEARD around the National Capital

By CARTER FIELD

Washington.—Cotton is admitted by one of the most serious problems in the whole New Deal set-up. High officials will admit it confidentially, though their public utterances are very different, indeed.

The whole question, of course, is whether the United States can go on exporting enough cotton to keep the cotton acreage now being farmed busy, and yet maintain the world price of American cotton at high enough levels to make raising the cotton profitable.

Enthusiasts about the AAA program talk vociferously about the natural advantages of America with regard to cotton. They refuse to see any cloud on the horizon. They insist that there is no other locality in the world where cotton as good as that raised in America can be produced except at costs exceeding American costs.

As a general proposition, this is correct. Most countries that can produce cotton at lower costs than the United States have a product which compares most unfavorably with that grown in America. The few places that can produce equally good cotton have very high costs.

But—the whole world is looking for a cheaper substitute for high grade cotton, and generally, where such a quest persists long enough, the goal is found. The Germans have been experimenting with wood pulp. They do not claim to have gotten very far. At present they are in about the stage of American production of rubber from goldenrod. It can be done successfully, but there is no particular point in doing it. The costs actually exceed the cost of good imported rubber.

The search for a substitute is by no means over. Incidentally, the Germans have had fair success in the last few months, producing a substitute for rubber from rye flour. They buy the rye flour from Poland.

As long as America produced cotton without restrictions, there was not much point to looking for a substitute, because any given year there might be a big cotton crop, and price would fall off, and anyone financially interested in the substitute would take a terrible beating that year.

Keep Price Up

Now, however, the definite aim of AAA is to keep the price of cotton up all the time, regardless of weather and other crop conditions, by the simple expedient of restricting acreage and governing the carry over each year. Which sets up a real prize for the discovery of a good substitute.

So actually the cotton program is in the same position as a company making a patent article, which is selling at a nice profit. Always there is the fear that some inventor will come along with something either just as good or better, which will destroy the market for the patent article.

A second and entirely different problem concerns the people who earned their living by working in cotton fields up to the time of AAA restrictions, but now have no work. At the moment the federal government is taking care of them on relief. They are part of the 20,000,000 now estimated to be supported thus. They are also, of course, part of the explanation of the fact that the number of people on relief is not diminishing, despite the fact that business is getting better.

While the same problem applies to other crops than cotton, the situation with respect to the others is not nearly so serious. Cotton is the big export crop, and always has been. Moreover, there has not been much change in that situation as the country grew bigger in population. Exports of wheat and other farm products have slowly declined as the population of the cities in America consumed larger and larger percentages of the total crop. But cotton maintained about the same ratio as between domestic consumption and export right up to the time when AAA restrictions began to operate. About 60 per cent of the total crop was exported. Which explains some of the gray hairs in the Department of Agriculture.

Tax Increases Seen

Not only are there to be no tax reductions by congress, even on levies which there is very good reason for removing or lowering, but tax increases are almost certain before adjournment.

This will not appear early in the session, as the administration is counting on a lot of maneuvering about taxes in its fight to hold down the soldier bonus disbursements. But before the final taps of the gavel of the Vice President in the senate and of the speaker in the house new taxes will have been levied, or old ones boosted. Because the treasury needs the money, and needs it badly.

There has been a vigorous checking over of old income tax returns, as many citizens have discovered, some to their sorrow. But the total amount of money realized by

the treasury in this endeavor has been disappointing. Official figures are not available, but there is no doubt as to the accuracy of this statement. For strangely enough, much as most people would love to dodge and evade income taxes, when it comes to writing down the figures on the return blanks they have a wave of honesty, or fear, whichever you prefer to believe.

So with the prospect of larger appropriations than ever, there must be new taxes, while the fight for lower tobacco and liquor taxes has been lost before the convening of congress—lost in Secretary Morgenthau's office.

The trouble is that even figuring on an extraordinary budget, in addition to the regular budget of normal governmental expenditures, will not justify the administration in not raising taxes. For while it is an easy bookkeeping method to say that this or that item, say of public works or relief, is extraordinary, and therefore should be financed by the sale of bonds instead of by taxes, there are other complications.

In the rule laid down by President Roosevelt, when he sent his first budget message, interest and sinking fund must be counted in the regular budget, though the sum on which they are calculated may be regarded as belonging in the extraordinary budget.

Total Is Mounting

Although there has been considerable saving in interest charges, due to the low rate of interest the government has had to pay, the total is mounting, and it will be recalled that up to now the budgets of this administration have eliminated sinking funds. This was done on the theory that during an emergency there was no point in saving up to pay off debt.

But it is obvious now that the appropriations for public works, to prime the pump of business recovery, and of relief to keep people from starving and freezing, are not going to decrease in the coming session. In all human probability they must be increased. And while they are still regarded as emergency appropriations, and therefore to be financed by bonds instead of taxes, there is a growing belief that the relief appropriations are never going to shrink to any figure which was thought normal a few years back—even two years back.

For it is now clear that relief is to be with the federal government always, the effort to make the local political units, states, counties and cities, take over their own problems to the contrary notwithstanding.

And it is plain to the experts who have been working on budget figures under Morgenthau's direction that the present flow of receipts from taxes is not sufficient to carry what cannot much longer be regarded as an emergency load, but which must soon be classified as a normal load.

In addition, there is fast approaching a time when sinking fund requirements can no longer be deferred. It has been hoped that a sufficient revival of business would result in boosting tax receipts to a sufficient extent to take care of this. But hardly to take care of the increased normal load.

About Public Lands

The old public lands question has been completely reversed apparently since the dawn of the New Deal. In former administrations senators from the western states complained bitterly and often about the fact that the federal government owned vast tracts of their land, which as a result were undeveloped, produced no taxes, and therefore added to the burden of the state government.

Now it is a southern state which protests—not against the federal government land now held, but against the acquisition of government land, which will thereupon pass out of the taxing base of the state.

In a recent telegram to Forestry News Digest, Governor Talmadge of Georgia says: "The federal government, according to reports, is optioning large areas of land in Georgia for purchase, the areas reaching into hundreds of thousands of acres. If any of the agencies of the state are consulted about much of this federal land acquisition program, it is not known to me. From such information as drifts in, it seems that options are being taken on submarginal lands, largely forest land and abandoned farms that are now in condition to use only for growing trees. If this land goes to federal government ownership it is removed from state taxation, removed without the state being consulted."

"I certainly do not want land owners of Georgia to have to compete with the federal government in growing timber or in producing naval stores, with the federal government using tax-free and subsidized lands and not obliged to make a profit. Georgia has long been getting a lot of wealth from its forests and it looks as if a lot more is coming from our woods, Georgians, and not the federal government, should get it. It seems to me that the federal government should at least co-ordinate its land purchase activities with some consideration for the rights of the state."

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Ontonog Java



Copra is Food, Currency and Chief Article of Trade.

Prepared by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

TO THE natives of Ontong Java, a group of isles lying in the island-besprinkled sea off the northwest coast of New Guinea, coconuts are synonymous with money, for copra (dried coconut meats) serves as currency. Five pieces of tobacco represent one hundred copra; a bolt of calico, a number of thousand copra according to its quality, and so on.

The growing coconuts on the palms are spoken of as "green," although they may be either green or yellow in color. At this stage they are full of the delicious sweet milk, thirst-quenching as lemonade, and the flesh they contain is very thin.

When the nuts are ripe, the flesh is of maximum thickness, and they fall to the ground. Then they are gathered and the thick husks are removed, the nuts emerging as they are sold in European and American shops. They are split in halves, the milk being now more or less sour, and are placed open end downward on the drying frame, a stand supported on legs about four feet high.

Mats are put over the nuts, and a fire lighted beneath the frame is allowed to burn for about twelve hours. The dried flesh then is readily removed from the shell with the aid of a porpoise bone or sharpened stick. This operation over, the dried flesh, or copra, as it is called, is taken to the trading station in baskets and exchanged for goods. When a ship calls, the copra is put into bags and weighed and then carried by natives into flat-bottomed punts, which are towed off to the ship by a motor launch.

The copra goes to Tulagi, on Florida Island of the Solomon group, where it is trans-shipped to Sydney. The oil extracted from copra is used in making soaps, candles, and butter substitutes; the pulp becomes cattle feed.

The other and far less important item of exchange at Ontong Java is trochus shell. This shell, like the copra, is shipped. It usually finds its way to Japan or Belgium, where it is cut and polished into "pearl" buttons. The cone-shaped, reddish shell (sometimes the red shows outside if the button has been imperfectly cut) is washed up into shallow water of the reefs where it is collected by the natives.

Trepang and Ivory Nuts.

The lagoon abounds with heche demer, the trepang or sea slug, a food delicacy of the East. It is collected by Japanese, who come out from Tulagi in special luggers. From dinghies they look out for the slugs below. When a suitable specimen is sighted, the diver goes over the side, sinks about a fathom, then transfixes his prey with the end of a sort of weighted harpoon, which he might be said to let fall upon it.

The slugs are cleaned, boiled, and dried. A full cargo for a lugger, about five tons, usually takes three months to collect. Although, of course, the price varies, it is normally \$4,000 to \$5,000.

Ivory nuts, the products of a graceful palm, are used chiefly for making buttons, knife handles and similar articles. The nuts are crushed and the objects molded from the paste made from them.

A native home on the islands is rectangular. It has a framework of poles, tied in position with rope made from the fiber of the coconut husk. No nails are used. The peaked roof is thatched with pananus-palm leaf, the leaves bent over and made fast to a stick about four or five feet long. These sticks, tied to the roof poles so that they overlap, make a virtually rain-proof roof.

The walls of the house are made of mats of plaited coconut leaf tied to the upright sticks. The floor is also covered with these mats. Natives use these mats as beds. Other mats are used for blankets, and pieces of wood as pillows.

Clean, Charming Natives.

The natives are a clean, friendly, and altogether charming people. Fond of swimming, they always bathe at least once a day. They are well-built and handsome, many reaching 5 feet 6 inches in height and some 6 feet or more. Their complexion, of a light coffee color, is similar to that of the Hawaiians.

Boys from about fourteen years of age to twenty wear their hair cut fairly close. From then until

they are married men with small families, they allow it to grow long. They resume hair-cutting at the beginning of middle age and continue the practice until they are old. For mature men, custom favors a rather close crop over most of the head, with a bushy tuft left at each side. There are, however, many exceptions to this rule.

Girls wear their hair in the two tufts until they become mothers, and from then on keep their heads fairly closely shaved—a style discouraging to lice. The hair is usually black, though at the ends it may be a reddish brown, and it may be straight, wavy, or, in a few cases, distinctly woolly.

Hands and feet of both men and women are frequently small and often delicately shaped, but the instep is rarely high and some natives are almost flat-footed. However, the legs are straight and beautiful, and many of the men have a grace and beauty that might be the envy of an ancient Greek.

Virtually every woman wears a skirt a fathom of canvas, kept in place by a belt of woven pandanus leaf or plaited human hair. The upper part of the body is left bare. For a man's attire a strip of calico passing around the waist and between the legs and tied back and front suffices. Children of both sexes go naked till they are about eleven or twelve.

Elaborate Tattooing.

Both men and women are tattooed. The decoration is begun in early childhood and with the forehead and nose. The forehead pattern resembles an open book. At the age of twelve or so, when the girls first wear skirts permanently, they receive suits of tattooing from waist to knee that look from a distance like close-fitting, figured black bloomers. Only on close inspection can the actual pattern be discerned.

The pattern is made up of fish and geometrical designs. As the girl grows older, fish are added around the hips and on the stomach. Later still when she becomes pregnant for the first time, the tattooing is finished by the covering of the breasts, chest, back, arms, and even the cheeks and chin lines of the face with fish design.

The men have far less tattoo than the women. Except on the forehead and nose, they have none until they are about twenty years of age. Then two broad bands are added, extending from the shoulder around the back to the thighs and in front terminating in two arrows on the chest. The arms is tattooed either with fish or a geometrical design. A row of dots just below the eye gives exactly the effect that a woman seeks when she darkens her lids; it makes the eyes stand out and appear to be much larger than they are. When a man is the father of a family, he may have a few fish added on his back and hips and thighs; but many forego this rite.

Coconut Palm Most Useful.

It would be impossible to find any other single tree which serves such a variety of ends as the coconut palm, especially on Luanania island. It gives food and drink—the latter particularly important on smaller islands where there are no water holes. Visitors have gone for ten days with nothing to drink but coconut milk. Also, it furnishes, besides the copra of commerce, a strongly alcoholic toddy and a sticky sirup resembling treacle.

The husks and shells provide fuel, and the dried spathe is excellent tinder. The shells serve as plates, spoons and water bottles. The wats for walls and for beds are made from the leaves; the dried leaves, tied into bundles, give light as torches and flares. The spines of the leaves are made into brooms, and the central stalk provides a weak timber which is put to a number of uses. The outer skin of this stalk is useful where a strong, tough rope is required, as in lashing the gunwale of the canoe to the dugout log.

The rope made from the husk fiber serves all general purposes from house ties to fish line. A coarse covering at the base of the leaf, which at a first glance looks like a roughly woven fabric, is made into strainers and sieves. The actual trunk of the palm, although not very durable, is made into spears and walking sticks, or cut into logs for sitting platforms.