



DESOLATE SUEZ

**FRENCHMEN
KEEP IT
GOING**

Experienced Special Pilots Guide Ships Through the Suez Canal.

Popular Idea That British Control Canal Doesn't Agree With Facts

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

THE Suez canal, thought by many laymen to be British controlled, is the property of and is operated by the Compagnie Universelle du Canal Maritime de Suez, registered as an Egyptian company under Egyptian law, with its main administrative offices in Paris. The president is always French, as are also 21 of its 32 directors and its entire secretariat and higher personnel. The general workers are a cosmopolitan group.

The canal company does nothing that it can get others to do equally well. When hand labor gave way to machine operation, various entrepreneurs were given the work of excavation and the majority of the digging was done by contractors. Part of the west jetty, made up of cement blocks worth \$65 apiece, was built by contract.

The company had to construct a fresh-water canal and filtering stations in order to carry on its basic work. But it leaves the delivery of the water to others. The personnel has just three things to do: to keep the canal open, to keep the ships passing through, and to keep the records.

The maintenance of the canal and its improvements is in the hands of the works department, whose officers are first class graduates from the Ecole Polytechnique and the Ecole Centrale in Paris.

Dentistry for Dredges.
One never knows how much equipment is required in the upkeep of a canal until he accompanies a member of the works department through the shops and around the small harbor where the broken-toothed dredges come back to have their dentistry done. It looks as though every disabled or incorrigible piece of wood or metal in that part of the world were dumped about.

Compared with the works department, the traffic department has a nice clean job. One sees no clutter of papers, no bulky correspondence. The principal officers are recruited from the French navy.

There is, in addition to the watchfulness of captain and pilot, an eye on every ship that goes through the canal from the time she is sighted in one sea until she is turned loose to shift for herself in the other.

The British post office refused to recognize the canal for two years. "Too slow," they said. Yet nothing but an airplane has equalled the speed actually attained between Port Said and Port Tewfik on the canal itself. The traffic department has some little Thornycroft boats which can make the trip in a trifle over two hours and a half.

The speed for steamers on the canal is 6.21 miles an hour, but pilots exceed the limit when side winds prevent the ship from obeying her rudder at a lower speed. The canal is now 104½ miles long, jetties having added considerably to its length in recent years.

Guard Against Blasts.

During the transit of the canal two pilots are used, each making one-half the journey. They serve only in an advisory capacity, though many a captain lets the pilot handle the ship as though it were his own.

Officers of the company unhesitatingly sacrifice a single vessel to the common good. A shipload of explosives was sunk near the Port Said waterworks and a cargo of benzene in the Commercial Basin. But ships carrying dangerous cargoes are being removed farther and farther from the main anchorages and as careful a quarantine is kept against spontaneous combustion as against cholera.

Of the towns on the canal, only one existed before De Lesseps began his work. Suez, then a miserable Arab village, is now a miserable Arab town. A few apartment houses are rising on squares of salt-encrusted land which are filled in to bring them up to the level of the street. The Sweet Water canal brightens things up and flowers, fruits, and vegetables line its banks.

Clouds and the softer light that comes with them give to nondescript Suez a beauty such as many a greener, lovelier spot would envy. The upper curve of the Red sea becomes purest emerald and beside the tawdry town seems carved in silver and onyx. In the back-

ground, their imposing flanks mottled by shadows into a chocolate and coffee marbling, lie the barren hills of Africa.

In the middle distance gray oil tanks seem almost phosphorescent in spite of the brightness of the whole scene, and tall chimneys of the Port Ibrahim refineries rise like full-leaded exclamation points.

Suez has little to do with the canal. It lies up a creek in which the dhows from the Arabian coast are stranded at low tide and is connected with Port Tewfik by a causeway.

Port Tewfik, like Port Said, is a by-product of the canal. When there was need for land on which to build, the dredges dumped it there.

Along the canal front runs the Avenue Helene, a shady bund with a comradely cafe or two. Nursemaids occupy shaded benches and one healthy little miss of three or four, who had fallen quite in love with Lieutenant Waghorn, stood gazing at his monument for minutes together.

Port Tewfik, gateway to the teeming East, is provincial. On the canal and hence a busy place, it is not a port at all. Ships wait in the Gulf of Suez until the pilot takes them in hand. Ships coming down the canal don't stop at Port Tewfik. They only drop the pilot and signal "full speed ahead."

Port Ibrahim is principally a haven for tankers which come there to spew up the viscous crude oil or pump forth a silver stream of refined petroleum.

To the east of Suez there was formerly a large camping ground for Mecca-bound caravans made up of swarthy Egyptians, slender Syrians, serious-faced Turks, and Moslems from Turkistan clad in wadded gowns made of bright-colored cloth like upholstery cretonnes, with their women hiding behind horsehair veils.

Presents Desolate Scene.

Now this vast expanse is deserted. A single stinking camel or a Bedouin on horseback would make it a desolate picture. Lacking the living element, it is only empty.

The first station north of Suez is Shallufa. Near the small wharf are some brightly painted buoys. At the foot of the signal mast are the canvas balls, cylinders, and cones used to signal to passing ships. Back of the homes and office is a water tank served by a windmill and provided with a filter. A few trees give sparse shade. That is all.

Along the northern half of the canal the railway runs just behind these canal stations and the station master can keep in touch with the world on land as well as the world of ships. But Shallufa is a lonely spot. The visitor is greeted like a prodigal son.

Some ships have a strict mail schedule to keep. Others are unkept tramps whose engines need no slowing down to keep them within the proper speed. Winds sweep across the desert with tremendous force, although the banks of the canal, behind which a steamer looks like a procession of masts, protect all but the largest ships. Dredges, with barges alongside, are always shifting their position.

No One Shown Favors.

The station master knows no favorites. It may cause the captain of a great cruise ship some chaffing at table if he has to tie up and let a smudgy tramp steam slowly by. But he takes his orders from those who know the canal and would lose their jobs if they didn't. As the tide ebbs and flows between the Red sea and the equalizing tanks of the Bitter lakes, the ship facing the current, be it ragged tramp or well-groomed merchant prince, ties up.

At Shallufa from the upper deck of any decently-large steamer one can trace the course of the ancient canal. Making the moderate depression more conspicuous are hair-cloth tents of the Bedouins, who plant grain and vegetables in its concavity. The station master of Shallufa uses a section of the ancient canal as a private garden.

When, in 1887, it was decided to use the canal day and night there arose the question of whether the canal or the ships should be lighted. The latter was decided upon. A fine experience is to lie flat on the bow above the headlight while its silver beams advance into the mystery of Asia on the one side and Africa on the other. Then another Polyhemus eye far down the canal turns its lidless stare upon one and comes silently on.

SEEN and HEARD around the NATIONAL CAPITAL

By Carter Field
FAMOUS WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT



Washington.—Elaborate maneuvering is going on to put Elliott Roosevelt, son of the President, in the house of representatives from the twelfth Texas district, now represented by Fritz Garland Lanham.

Under the Texas law, a special election to fill a vacancy is more or less a free-for-all. There is no primary, there is no runoff. Everybody who wants to enters, and the high man takes the prize. Once in, the incumbent has a big advantage at the next regular primary, and of course a Democrat has no trouble in the election if he weathers the primary.

Lanham has been in the house since Woodrow Wilson's last congress and has been elected at regular elections beginning with 1920, which makes him rather a veteran. He has developed quite a streak of insurgency, being out of sympathy with a good many New Deal measures. In short, he is more of a Garner man than a Roosevelt man.

Nobody is claiming the honor of having first thought of the plan to put young Roosevelt in his place, but it has been taken up with some enthusiasm by the Texas delegation, and has not exactly been frowned on by the White House.

Texas on the inside of the maneuver want Lanham "promoted." They say he has had a splendid record, but has become slightly fed up with service in the house.

Just a few days ago the Texas delegation voted to endorse Lanham for president of the University of Texas, which post is vacant because of the death of the former president.

That would be much simpler than the original idea, which was to have the administration give Lanham a more important job. Among the jobs considered for him are that of assistant secretary of state, made vacant by the promotion of Sumner Welles to under-secretary of state, and a post with the Communications commission.

Some Embarrassment

But there is a slight embarrassment on the part of the White House to make an appointment so obviously to clear the way to putting the President's son in the house. Kicking a man upstairs to get rid of his vote is something else again. It is one of the most often used political devices. Sometimes it does not work, as when President Coolidge "promoted" Senator William S. Kenyon to be a judge at a time when Kenyon as a progressive senator was a thorn in the administration's side. But Kenyon was shortly thereafter—at the next regular election—replaced by Smith Wildman Brookhart, which was more or less like jumping out of the frying pan into the fire.

So the White House would be very pleased at having the way cleared for Elliott by some other method than by giving Lanham a political "promotion." Especially as there is always more or less feeling that this would not be good for party discipline—handing plums to insurgents.

If the scheme works out Elliott should land the job handsily, Texans say. They predict that a large number of candidates would enter the "free-for-all" with the result that the opposition would be divided, and enough people would vote for the magic name of Roosevelt to pull Elliott through. Elliott has been living in Fort Worth for several years, and is reported to be popular.

Seek U. S. Help.

The German drive to have the United States join in development of dirigible transatlantic travels continues, but it seems unlikely to be authorized this year. Dr. Hugo Eckener, most successful navigator of dirigibles so far, is most persuasive. He has met most of the arguments against the idea. But two of the arguments he has met most effectively promise to stay the hand of congress for this session.

One of the objections, of course, is the shock still remaining from the Hindenburg tragedy. Every one, including our naval experts, agrees that this would not have been a disaster at all had the big bag been filled with helium instead of explosive hydrogen. But the fact remains that so many people throughout the country were and still are shocked at the Hindenburg disaster, and still remember that this ended the last delusion about lighter than air transport—the delusion that the Germans at least had solved the problem—that there is no popular demand for action.

So when a senator or representative opposes doing anything about it, or, as is more usual, when he simply makes no move to cause action, there is no unfavorable reaction against him among his voters he must face when he comes up for re-election.

The other argument is wrapped up in the neutrality propaganda. When Doctor Eckener was before the congressional committees he was grilled closely about the danger of helium, sold to Germany by the United States or possibly in United States dirigibles while they might

be abroad and seized during a war, being used for war purposes.

Dirigibles in War

Doctor Eckener made two most effective answers, so far as logic is concerned, according to army and navy officers who have been studying the situation since. One was that the dirigible would not be an effective weapon in war today. He said they would be easy victims of airplanes and antiaircraft artillery. In fact, this stage had really been reached, he said, before the close of the World war.

But—and this was much more convincing—if nations did want to use dirigibles in war, they would not be deterred by the lack of helium. They would use hydrogen despite the greater danger.

Doctor Eckener's remarks along this line have been closely studied by our army and navy aviation experts. Their thought is that the nation which would decide to use a dirigible in war would probably prefer to use hydrogen. The advantage would be that the lifting power of hydrogen is greater than that of helium. Therefore the same gas bag could carry a heavier load of bombs, more defensive guns, etc.

A dirigible supported by hydrogen could rise more quickly in an emergency, thus escaping antiaircraft guns.

New Dealers Worry

Two of the groups of the "submerged third" of our population which are giving the New Dealers the most gray hairs are the small farmers, particularly the mountaineers, and the folks who work in very small stores and factories, and hence do not come under the wage and hour legislation now pending.

The mountaineers are particularly troublesome. In the first place they do not seem to appreciate what is done for them. They want, apparently, to retain their "rugged individualism." None of the resettlement projects which were the apple of Rexford G. Tugwell's eye, and which so intrigued Mrs. Roosevelt, have been notably successful. Quite the contrary.

Yet they are being hit and will be hit by most of the New Deal legislation harder than most folks. While they do not buy much, naturally payroll social security taxes, and state sales taxes necessitated by the social burdens the states have assumed, boost the cost of everything they buy. Thus not only is their buying power reduced but their lot made just that much harder.

A group of congressmen and their wives who just returned from a trip to the Smoky Mountain national park, on the border of North Carolina and Tennessee, brought back a vivid impression of how the social welfare legislation, both state and national, is hitting this particular segment of the submerged third.

"We didn't go off the beaten track," said the wife of one. "We weren't looking for anything but scenery. But we were shocked at the living conditions of the mountain folk living right along the main highway. Women were working in the fields, just as animal-like as in the most backward sections of Europe. We didn't see any hitched plows, as in the recent disgraceful case which figured in the newspapers, but we could imagine they often were.

Pitiful Conditions

"It was pitiful—the scrubby, rocky land they were tilling, the squalid, dirty cabins they called homes, and the cruel grinding daylight to darkness labor they were putting in so futilely.

"Yet we knew by our own purchases that when those folks went down to the store to buy something they not only paid a higher price because of payroll taxes to give somebody else old age and unemployment insurance, but they were, in North Carolina, paying a three per cent sales tax. When we got up into West Virginia, we found, incidentally, that there were no exemptions, as in many states, from this sales tax, which here was two per cent.

"My state of Illinois has a three per cent sales tax, but when a poor man buys a sandwich and a cup of coffee—anything not more than 15 cents, that purchase is exempt. But in West Virginia the sales tax on a ten cent purchase is ten per cent, not two per cent, because they do not have tokens to split pennies."

The difficulty the New Deal anticipates with small, local groups of employees' is a matter of constitutional law. Some believe that is why President Roosevelt is so determined about his Supreme court enlargement bill despite the recent liberality of the present court. He wants, they say, to be able to reach the little store or plant which employs three to fifteen men or women. Political danger in such a move would be very real, but it is these employees who work longer hours, and for less pay, on the average, than the workers who by union activities better their conditions, and who will be affected by the wages and hours bill when that measure has become law.

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Floyd Gibbons Adventurers' Club Hello Everybody!



"Streak of Death"

By FLOYD GIBBONS
Famous Headline Hunter

YOU know, boys and girls, about half of our battle to live is fought against ourselves and other people, and the other half is fought against Old Dame Nature. For every Bill Jones who got himself caught in a whirling piece of man-made machinery or had to fight for his life against some vicious or crazed fellow human, there is a Pete Smith, who finds himself in a jam with an earthquake, or a wild animal, or some other of Mother Nature's tools of destruction.

I wouldn't attempt to say which type of adventure is worse. I've got a hunch that one is just about as bad as the other. But there's something about Dame Nature's right hooks to the jaw that makes them more terrifying than the others. I guess that's because we don't understand Nature so well as we understand ourselves and the machines we create.

And here's the story of a bout with Nature, sent to me by Mrs. John J. Sproul, of Keyport, N. J. It's one of those things that might happen to anybody and everybody. And when it came along, it threw the whole Sproul family into a sudden, reasonless panic.

Adventure came on the Sproul family in the dead of the night. They were all sleeping—Mother and Dad and the children. The Sprouls had four children then, but only three of them were at home. The other was away for the night. The evening had been cloudy and threatening. The sky had been black overhead when they had gone to bed. And now, suddenly, they were awakened out of a sound sleep by a series of loud, crashing reports.

This Was No Ordinary Storm, No, Sir!

The din was so terrific that the Sprouls jumped out of bed. It was a thunderstorm—but what a storm. The first sweeping patter of the rain quickly rose to a loud, drumming roar. The wind howled, and the thunder, punctuated by bright flashes of lightning, sounded like a battery of siege guns being fired right beside the house.

Few people pay much attention to a night thunderstorm. Some folks sleep right through them. Others get up and shut the windows to keep the floor from getting rained on. But this storm was so terrific that the Sprouls were alarmed. Every crashing bolt of lightning seemed to be striking right around the house. John Sproul was hardly out of bed—he was standing in the middle of the bedroom floor—when one of the little boys came running into the room.

John and the boy started for the stairs. As he did, he shouted back to Mrs. Sproul. "Get the other children," he cried, "and come down-



She Found Her Husband Lying Stiff and Still on the Floor.

stairs as quick as you can. I'll light the lamp in the kitchen so you can see."

Mrs. Sproul Is Petrified With Fear.

John went down the stairs. Mrs. Sproul could hear him in the kitchen. She had started out of the room, headed down the hall toward the room in which her two other children were, when suddenly she heard a deafening clap of thunder, louder than all the rest.

"I could feel the house shake, and vibrate, and immediately I thought it must have been struck," she says. "There was a small like that of brimstone permeating the whole upper floor. I stopped and stood stock still for a moment. The children were still in their bed and I had to get them. But right then I couldn't seem to move. 'I don't know how long I stood there, but it must have been for a long time, for presently it occurred to me that, since that last crash, I had not heard a sound from either my husband in the kitchen, or from my son who had followed him downstairs. And then, all of a sudden, I heard a voice coming from below.'

Fear Lurked in the Blackness of Night.

Mrs. Sproul says that voice sounded as if it came from the dead. It was her little son downstairs with his father and he was calling very feebly, "Mamma—mamma—come here. Papa's dead!"

Ten seconds before, she had been stiff with fright and unable to move a muscle. But that sound shocked her into activity. She ran through the hall and began groping her way down the stairs. The lower floor was in total darkness. She began calling hysterically to her boy—asking him where he was. At last he answered. "I'm here," he said. "By the high chair."

Feeling her way through the dark house, she moved toward the high chair. Thunder was still roaring outside and an occasional flash of lightning brightened the room. At last she found her boy—lying on the floor. She picked him up, carried him into the dining room and asked him if he knew where his father was. "He's in the kitchen by the stove," the boy said. "I saw him fall down. I guess daddy has been killed."

She groped her way toward the kitchen. Her bare feet lit on something wet—then on shattered bits of broken glass. But she didn't even feel it in the stress of the moment. She didn't know until later that her husband had fallen with the lamp in his hand and that glass and oil were strewn all over the kitchen floor.

Storm Provides a Weird Tattoo.

She found her husband—lying stiff and still on the floor. She began screaming hysterically at the top of her voice. But at the same time she was tugging at John Sproul's still form, dragging it toward the dining room.

In a few minutes neighbors began clamoring at the door. They crowded in and a lamp was lighted. John Sproul wasn't dead, but he was badly burned by the lightning, and his clothes were charred and smoking. When they pulled his clothing from his body they found that the lightning had played a curious trick. Photographed on his back was a silvery spot the exact shape of a tree.

A doctor came, worked over him, and brought him back to consciousness. He said he couldn't understand how he had lived through the shock, and he was fascinated by that tree imprinted on John's back. He said he'd never forget it—but what Mrs. Sproul will never forget is that terrible night of storm and destruction.

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Gibraltar, Rocky Promontory

Gibraltar is a rocky promontory near the southern point of the Iberian Peninsula and commanding the western entrance to the Mediterranean sea. It is a colonial possession of Great Britain. Covering about two square miles, it consists mainly of a fortified rock, 1,439 feet high, at the foot of which is the town with a population of over 21,000.

Etesian Winds

Etesian winds are winds blowing at stated times of the year, applied especially to north and northeast winds which prevail at certain seasons in the Mediterranean region. They are due to the heat of the African Sahara, which causes a huge displacement of air due to superheating. This is supplied by the cooler air from Southern Europe.

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Pattern 5830.

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