

# Globe Travelers Fly Over Dense Jungles, Magic Isles Fringed With Coconut Palms in Tropical Siam

Told By LOWELL THOMAS, Correspondent, 1924.

From Saigon to Bangkok was the most romantic and colorful leg of the entire journey round the world.

Here the American airman was nearer the equator than at any other point along their route. Flying through tropical skies over the regions seldom visited by travelers from the west. Below them were jungle stretches where many white persons had never been either by land or by air. And they were winging their way over three of the most romantic countries in the whole of the mysterious continent of Asia—Cochin, China, ancient Cambodia and Siam, "the kingdom of the white elephants."

At the rate of a hundred miles an hour, in airplanes more marvelous than the magic carpet created by the imagination of the oriental story teller, these six aerial navigators from America were flying over Marco Polo's faroff "land of the Golden Chersonese."

**Over Tropical Jungles.**

"As we left the jungle of ancient Cambodia behind us and cut across a corner of the Gulf of Siam, this little known arm of the China sea was a glassy sheet of sapphire blue. But," adds Commander Lowell Smith, "as though to prevent the scene from becoming monotonous the Creator of this fascinating world, round which we were flying, has dotted the Gulf of Siam with a hundred magic isles, fringed with tall coconut palms and white sandy beaches. The jungle beyond the shore line of many of these tropical islands looked so dense that it surely would take a day to hack one's way through a mile of it. Some however, were nearly devoid of jungle and covered with long, waving elephant grass that made them look as smooth as well-kept lawns up where we were."

"Flying lower to get a better view of them, we explored them with a view to coming here on our honeymoon that is, if any of the rest of us are ever going to be as fortunate as Erik and Jack in winning favor in the eyes of the fairer sex. Erik's sweetheart flew along with him on the instrument board. Printed on celluloid, to protect it from the salt spray, from the blizzards of the north and from the typhoons and monsoons of the tropics, her picture was his mascot and inspiration all the way around the world."

"After landing on the Menam river at Bangkok, and dodging about between junk sampans and houseboats, and nearly colliding with banyan trees and carcasses of animals floating toward the sea, we spent the rest of the afternoon working on the planes. Fortunately a few minor repairs were necessary. This gave us an excuse to remain over for a day in the capital of Siam before flying on across the Malay peninsula to the Bay of Bengal. So some of us spent the night on the destroyer, while the others, tempted by thoughts of nice beds, insect proof nets, and electric fans, went up to the Royal hotel of Bangkok, hoping to escape the mosquitoes and other sleep destroyers that take the joy out of life on every river in the tropics."

**Human Bodies in River.**

"Next morning while making our repairs on the cruiser, 'Les' happened to be looking down the river and saw the body of a baby bobbing past with the current. Much agitated he called the attention of some English people who had come out in a launch to look over the planes. They smiled and replied that they were surprised because we had been in Bangkok so many hours without seeing more human bodies floating down stream. It seemed to be an everyday occurrence, merely a little touch of local color to which they had become so accustomed they no longer paid any attention."

"We were delighted with the Siamese, and particularly impressed by the intelligence, courtesy, and charm of the upper classes. We liked them the instant we met them. In fact, the welcome of Bangkok was so warm that once again our planes were in danger of being crushed by hundreds of sampans. But the Siamese officers strung circles of police boats around each cruiser for protection."

**Good Siamese Air Force.**

"Just before we started ashore with Mr. Dickinson, the American charge d'affaires, a squadron of planes appeared over the coconut palms and banyans. Right down the Menam river they flew in formation. When directly above us they dipped and gave us the salute of the Siamese royal air force. Siam is indeed a land of contrasts. Called 'the Venice of the east' because most of the dwellings are built on piles along canals, everywhere a result of its serene quiet dugout canoes and sampans filled with naked people, while overhead flew the airplanes introduced by King Rama VI, an Oxford man, and the first Asiatic potentate to be educated in the occident."

"I imagine we saw nearly as much during our day's stay in Siam as many visitors see in a week. The representatives of King Rama, the officers of the Siamese royal air force, and our own countrymen escorted us about the city. First they took us to the internationally famous palace of the monarch of this tropic realm. As we passed the golden elephants at the outer portal the troops of the king of Siam were there to welcome us. Up the marble staircase, and through great carved doors of teak we entered a vestibule with a 40-foot ceiling whose teak walls were hung with the coats of mail of ancient Siam. From there we were ushered into the council room where kings of Siam recline on a golden couch to receive advisers and envoys. Behind this combination throne and divan hangs a portrait of a half-naked Buddhist pontiff who, with shaven head and half-closed eyes, looks down upon the assemblage. "Although we pass Javanese, Burmese, Cambodians, Malays, Chinese,

Siam, Was, Karns and Japanese on the canals and tamarisk lined streets of Bangkok, the state religion of the Siamese is Buddhism. Every youth in Siam is obliged to become a monk for a time just as the boys in European countries are compelled to serve in the army. Of the 8,000,000 people in the country more than 80,000 are Buddhist monks. In fact, there are nearly 20,000 Buddhist temples, gold-spired pagodas, and fantastic teak monasteries.

**Palace Impressive Sight.**

"From the council room the generals, admirals, ex-prime ministers, and other dignitaries who were showing us the sights of Siam took us into another chamber, where we saw two huge and exquisitely carved elephant tusks, and then as a final climax they marched us into the throne room, with its lofty ceiling of inlaid glass, its frescoed walls of glittering gold leaf, its dazzling crystal candelabra, its marble mosaic floor, and the king of Siam's throne underneath a nine-story, pagoda-like structure covered with gold. The oriental magnificence of this palace, and the fact that we, the heroes of the Arabian Nights, had flown here through the sky, made us feel like modern Aladdins, and we had to pinch each other to make sure we were awake."

"Although the king business is getting to be one of the most difficult and hazardous jobs in the world, perhaps only a trifle less dangerous than a job in the United States air service as a test pilot at Dayton, being king of Siam has its compensations. For instance, every woman in the country belongs to him, according to the custom of the country. In fact, all of his subjects are slaves. But in reality Siam is 'Muang Thai,' which translated, means 'Land of the Free.' The Siamese are modest, however, and do not call their country 'the home of the brave.'

**White Elephants Too Costly.**

"From the king's palace with its golden, tiled roof we were taken to the stables of the royal white elephants. As a matter of fact, we were as interested in seeing the king's flock of white elephants as anything else in Siam. But this was our one disappointment in Bangkok. They are not white at all—merely a sort of sickly pinkish. In other words, albinos pachyderms.

"The white elephant is still the royal animal of the country, but ever since the present Oxonian monarch ascended the throne, took unto himself only one wife instead of 20, introducing typewriters, phonographs, American automobiles, airplanes, and expert advisors from the United States and Europe, the white elephants of Siam have been attended with less and less pomp and circumstance."

"Whereas it was only a few years ago that whenever a so-called white elephant was located in the jungle, he was captured, tied with silken ropes, assigned a group of Siamese counts, barons, and marquises to serve as his valets, bathed with perfumed water, given tender shoots of grass, cane, and bamboo, and trays of wheat cakes and syrup to eat, water scented with the fragrance of jessamine to drink, elevated to a peerage at court, baptized by the Buddhist priests, and assigned a corps of uniformed attendants with palm leaf fans to keep the flies and gnats away from the royal face. Those were surely palmy days for the white elephants of Siam. In fact the cost of maintaining these pinkish pachyderms in royal fashion was enough to bankrupt many a Siamese nobleman. And it was this that the expression 'to have a white elephant on their hands' came into existence."

**Absolute Monarch.**

"But times are not what they used to be in Siam, according to the brief conversation we held with the few scrawny-looking white elephants in the royal stables. For instance, we visited one Buddhist temple where we saw a statue of St. Peter at one of the gates and a statue of a Dutchman smoking a pipe at another. But there is one quaint little custom that we were glad to discover was as popular today as it ever was. I refer to the custom of beheading. The king is an absolute monarch, one of the few left on earth. And as a special honor a beheading has been arranged for us. This gay event was to have taken place a fortnight later, but was moved up just for our benefit. However, we sent our regrets at not being able to visit the 'playground' where these frolics are always held in Bangkok. We explained that we never attended beheadings unless we were given the right to say who was to be beheaded."

"Before concluding this one day jaunt around Bangkok, the longest sight-seeing tour that we had time to make from the time we left America until our return, we stopped to pay our respects to the ranking Siamese who happened to be in the city. When we were ushered into his drawing room, to our astonishment we saw a picture of our own General Mitchell, assistant chief of air service, occupying the place of honor on the prince's table. General Mitchell had been there on a tiger hunt only a few weeks before and every one in Siam was loud in praise of the man who fought so hard to make the people of America appreciate the fact that the world has at last reached the era of travel by air."

"That night we slept on the destroyer in order to be ready for our long flight across Malaya to Burma, on the road to Mandalay!"

Read the next installment of the thrilling story of the round-the-world flight in *The Omaha Bee* tomorrow.

**Mrs. Ailor Dies in Arizona:**  
Brought to Stella for Burial  
Stella, Dec. 31.—Mrs. Kate Ailor, who died at the home of her grand-daughter, Mrs. Thomas Jackson, in Prescott, Ariz., was brought back here this week for burial in Stella cemetery beside her husband, who died 13 years ago. Elder J. W. Sapp preached the funeral service at the Christian church in Stella.

Mrs. Ailor was born in Ohio in 1844 and had lived in or near Stella for 40 years. Her death resulted after a week's illness following a stroke of paralysis.

**SOROSIS Shoes Reduced**  
Broken Lines from Stock

5.95

From our regular stock of footwear we have taken all models in which the line of sizes is broken. These pumps represent excellent footwear values when priced at 5.95.

Black satin slippers  
Patent strap pumps  
Gored pumps of patent leather  
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**Silk Chiffon Velvet**  
40-inch imported French velvets, black, navy, brown and taupe; reduced to, yard..... **5.95**

**All Silk Canton**  
40-inch canton in street shades, including black and ivory. An exceptionally at the reduced price.... **2.29**

**All Silk Charmeuse**  
An excellent quality, and 40 inches wide. Offered in brown, navy and black. The reduced price, yard.. **1.95**

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**Sale of Linens**  
*Friday, January 2*

One of the greatest events of the entire year—  
we import direct—the prices reflect the saving



**Fine Linen Damask Table Cloths**  
*With Matching Napkins*

Most exceptional values in beautiful round designs:  
Empire Scroll, Rose, Chrysanthemum and Laurel Band.

<p>2x2-yard cloth, reduced to ..... <b>10.89</b></p> <p>2x2½-yard cloth, reduced to ..... <b>13.89</b></p> <p>2x3-yard cloth, reduced to ..... <b>15.89</b></p>	<p>2x3¼-yard cloth, reduced to ..... <b>18.89</b></p> <p>2x4-yard cloth, reduced to ..... <b>22.89</b></p> <p>24x24-inch napkins, reduced to ..... <b>15.89</b></p>
<p>22x22-inch napkins, reduced to, dozen ..... <b>13.89</b></p>	

*Extra Special!*

<p><b>100 Table Cloths</b> <b>3.00</b></p>	<p><b>100 Dozen Napkins</b> <b>8.89</b></p>
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All pure linen cloths of 68x68-inch size. One of the greatest values in the January linen sale.

John S. Brown & Sons' reliable napkins of all pure linen. Buy them at the January price.

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*Discount 20 Percent*

No piece has been reserved, because it is too beautiful—every piece of fancy linen may be had at this discount price.

**Madeira:** table cloths, luncheon cloths, center pieces, tea cloths, bridge sets, buffet sets, scarfs, doilies and napkins.

**Mosaic:** luncheon cloths, tea cloths, scarfs and napkins. **Venetian Lace:** Scarfs, center pieces, doilies. **Italian Crash Linen:** bridge sets, scarfs, oblong doilies, napkins, buffet sets and vanity sets.

*Towel Values!*

<p><b>Huck Towels</b> <b>19c</b></p> <p>200 dozen towels of a very good quality huck.</p> <p><b>Linen Towels</b> <b>50c</b></p> <p>200 dozen towels of all pure linen huck with hemstitched hems.</p>	<p><b>Turkish Towels</b> <b>23c</b></p> <p>300 dozen striped Turkish towels, Bargains.</p> <p><b>Heavy Turkish</b> <b>79c</b></p> <p>Extra heavy bath towels of a quality that will wear and launder well.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">STREET FLOOR</p>
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<p><b>Leopard Cat</b> <b>\$395</b></p> <p>The very newest sports coat, with collar and cuffs of the finest, softest natural dark raccoon. A misses' model.</p>	<p><b>Hudson Seal</b> <b>\$495</b></p> <p>A very fine model of Hudson seal with kolinsky collar and cuffs—marks of superiority over less expensive, and original models.</p>
<p><b>Broadtail</b> <b>\$450</b></p> <p>With skirt trimming, puff cuff, and crush collar of Viatka dyed squirrel, this model coat of American broadtail is stunning on one who wears a small misses' size.</p>	<p><b>Hudson Seal</b> <b>\$595</b></p> <p>Collar, cuffs and front border of broadtail marten, are an acquisition to the Hudson seal coat, which boasts this fine trimming.</p>
<p><b>Cinnamon Caracul</b> <b>\$295</b></p> <p>A cinnamon brown caracul coat of straight slender lines becomes a wonderful bargain at 245, when the collar, cuffs and border are of cinnamon fox.</p>	<p><b>Jap Mink Coat</b> <b>\$495</b></p> <p>Any woman would love the Jap model with collar, cuffs and border fluffy brown fox.</p>
<p><b>Natural Rat</b> <b>\$145</b></p> <p>Two models of the smart sports type this reasonable price, one of natural muskrat with collar and cuffs of raccoon the other 48-inch length in herringbone effect.</p>	

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