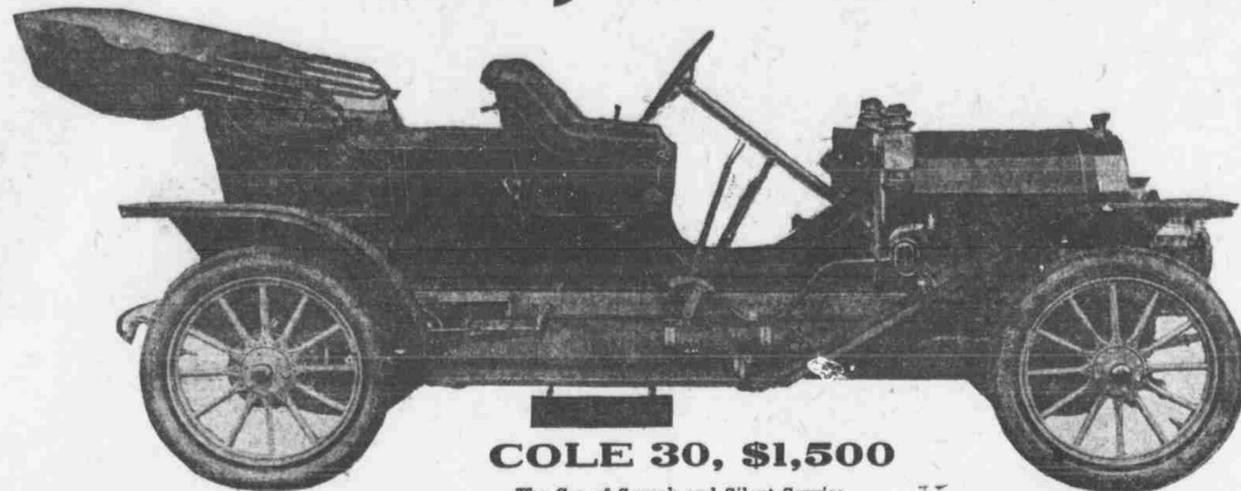


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A BATTLE WITH THE SAND

Now Being Fought by Cape Cod Canal Engineers.

NATURE IN HER WORST MOOD

Opposed to Them are Storms, Winds and Waves—The Issue Is, Can the Entrance to the Canal be Kept Open?

BOSTON, Oct. 9.—They are just scooping sand along the Cape Cod canal and not saying a word. Probably no canal of similar importance was ever built with less noise and bluster than has so far marked the progress of this work.

There are no great cuts to be made, with consequent use of tons of explosives, no rattle of machinery drilling through rocks and overhanging cliffs, no expensive condemnation suits to be filed in the courts, no villages to be destroyed nor expensive properties to be torn away to make way for the course of the canal. It is simply a case of digging and digging and digging, and just keeping everlastingly at it from sunrise to sunset.

If you walk along the line of the survey, which is now definitely set forth, you will understand why this is true. Nature has given the builders of this waterway a lot of assistance. In the first place the eight miles which it is necessary to cut across to connect the waters of Buzzards bay and Cape Cod bay is made up in chief by the Monument river to the south and the Scudder river to the north, while separating them is a ridge that at its highest point does not exceed thirty feet above sea level. In the second place the whole of this steeply sloping arm of Massachusetts, from where it is joined onto the mainland to its termination at Provincetown, is of a curious geographical formation. Everywhere it is flat, with but few hills, and is composed almost entirely of sand and gravel.

When one considers the apparent ease with which a canal here may be built and also considers the loss of life, of ships and of cargoes which the frequent fogs and the exposure of the low, sandy coast to north-east storms have caused one wonders why a canal was not constructed many years ago for the seeping traffic between the Massachusetts and down east ports and those to the south.

You will nearly have reached the end of your walk across the cape from Buzzards bay before you come upon the real obstacle that has hitherto discouraged engineers and financiers. At the southern entrance to the canal Buzzards bay is landlocked and affords an excellent harbor, but the northern entrance is directly from Barnstable bay, which has no natural protection. This body of water, as everybody knows who has seen it in winter, is open to the fury of storms from the north and northwest.

The builders of the canal saw that here, then, was their most serious problem. If they had not realized it from the very outline of the coast they would have discovered it from what remains of a former

effort at canal building. For here lies a great ditch into which twenty-five years ago men dumped \$1,000,000 with as little result as though they had dumped the money into quicksands.

The old work itself remains, but the connection with the bay is sealed as closely as if it never existed. The relentless storms have piled the sand high along the beach and piled it so tightly into the gap that men endeavored to make in the shore line that not even a sign of it remains.

How these former builders hoped to overcome the difficulty is not material, but the present builders have gone deeply into the subject and after much study of tides and winds have undertaken a renewed struggle with the elements. William Barclay Parsons, the chief engineer of the work, proposes to provide protection against the winds by building a breakwater out beyond the jetty.

This breakwater will be 3,000 feet long, running in an east and west direction and extending to a six fathom curve at low water so that vessels entering from the bay even in rough weather will be able to obtain smooth conditions before going into the canal. This, of course, is the work of the canal company, but it is expected that in addition the United States government will construct a harbor of refuge by the building of other breakwaters, so that vessels after having passed the canal may lie at anchor until they are ready to continue their voyage.

It is upon this great stone work that the money of the company will be expended and that the genius of the engineers will be put to the test. The jetties are already taking on a definite form from the pile of rock that lies out in the bay and another pile that lies on the beach.

Schooners with granite from the rugged Cape Ann coast are daily discharging their loads into the devouring sands. That the beach has already begun to collect its toll from the canal builders is evidenced by the wreckage of lighters that may be seen around the construction works.

The notices who are familiar with the conditions of the coast and have all their lives battled with its tides and winds find an almost endless subject of discussion in this effort to control the shifting, treacherous sand. They are arguing long and vehemently whether after all the jetties will not collect sand fast enough to choke up the canal entrance unless it is constantly dredged.

The old canal, which looks not unlike a ditch, will save the excavators some work, for it will be turned over to the use of the new builders, and the line of the survey passes through its center for its entire length. From its beach end, choked now with its marsh weeds and grass, to its ending in a pasture it stands as a melancholy reminder of one of the most important of the many projects that were formerly advanced for a Cape Cod canal.

It was a project of P. A. Lockwood, who had invented a dredge which he had made an unsuccessful effort to sell to the French government when it was engaged in the construction of the Panama canal. He interested capitalists in his scheme and for a time it seemed that the canal

would really be built. But the dredge proved rather poor after all, as it was out of order about half the time, and Mr. Lockwood's death brought an end to the efforts of this particular company. He had succeeded, however, in digging a channel one mile long, 100 feet wide and sixteen feet deep.

His scheme was not by any means the only one that has ever been advanced for the building of a Cape Cod canal. Back as far as 1678 one of the citizens of Sandwich had the idea of making a continuous waterway by joining the two rivers. The records of the Massachusetts Bay colony show that an order for a survey of a waterway at this same point was entered and that General Thomas Machin, an engineer of reputation, was appointed to superintend the work. The outbreak of the revolution, however, checked this plan at a very early stage.

In 1831 and again in 1835 the most famous engineer of the day, Leammil Baldwin, made several surveys based upon those of Machin and recommended the building of the canal. Again nothing was done, and the project was forgotten until 1884, when a representative from Massachusetts induced President Monroe to recommend in his annual message that a commission be appointed to determine the advisability of the construction of the canal by the federal government.

In 1886 and again in 1885 plans for the building of the canal were revived, but they all came to nothing. Then followed a long series of private schemes either of visionary dreamers or of swindlers whose efforts gave no promise of success. In most of the projects mismanagement and dishonesty were the chief characteristics, and in none of them were more than a few spadefuls of earth turned. Not until Lockwood's time was actual work on a canal project undertaken.

From the land end of the old Lockwood canal the survey of the present canal crosses the line between the towns of Sandwich and Bourne and continues for some distance parallel with the Old Colony railroad. At this point much of the space between the canal and the railroad is occupied by the works of a car manufacturing company, one of the industries that have already received a great impetus in growth from the canal project.

To the north of this factory, in plain view of all passing trains, is a high hill which has been denuded of vegetation, leaving a great scar of yellow sand, which is confidently pointed out by wise travelers as the Culbert cut of the canal. In reality, however, it has nothing to do with the construction work, but has been cut away by the car company to secure sand for filling in its land.

The canal passes more than a quarter of a mile to the south from the base of this hillside. Digging here is easy and nothing bars the way until the highway near the Bourne station is reached. Here are two small houses, the first along the line that it is necessary to move. It was feared that the independent Cape Cod spirit of the owners might cause them to refuse to sell their property, but they were quite reasonable about it and sold their houses immediately to the company, with the privilege of living in them for five

years after they had been moved back some ten or fifteen feet.

A short distance further on is what must have once been a fine old Cape Cod place, but the buildings have fallen almost to ruins and will meet a merciful end when they give way to the advance of progress. As is often the case with the building of public improvements, the construction of the canal will bring about the destruction of many places replete with the history and tradition of Cape Cod people.

The old Perry homestead, which was built by ancestors of August Belmont, who once owned the entire strip of land through which the canal will pass, has already been torn down. The Tupper house, which was built in 1827 and which descended from father to son for generation after generation, with never a transfer or a mortgage appearing on the record for 27 years, has been purchased by the canal company and will also be razed. The old Pope tavern at Sandwich, which Daniel Webster frequently visited, will lie just outside of the canal zone.

The old station at Bourneville lies in the course of the canal and will be removed. Another landmark which the plans will require to be removed is the old bridge at Buzzards Bay. This will be replaced by a drawbridge, and the Buzzards Bay station will be south of the Monument river instead of north as it is at present placed.

This railroad will also cause some change in the appearance of Gray Gables, where, it will be remembered, the nation's summer capital was located during President Cleveland's administration, for on part of the property the new railway station will be built, near the Buzzards Bay entrance to the canal.

The canal zone is 1,000 feet wide, the width of the canal at the top will be from 20 to 30 feet, and 125 feet at the bottom. The depth of the canal, as originally planned, was twenty-five feet, which is sufficient for the passage of traffic vessels. But the interest that has been aroused in the canal since the beginning of the work and the talk of the deep waterway along the Atlantic coast may make an important change in the depth and may require the digging of five additional feet for the passage of war vessels.

A party for the securing of data for a report to the convention of the Atlantic Deep Waterway association at Norfolk in November recently went over the line and made an inspection of the works. Besides the president of the association and several members of the congressional committee, the government was represented by Colonel J. C. Sanford, engineer of the Newport district. After the report of this body has been acted upon something more definite as to the full extent of changes in plans will develop.

Upon this too will depend to a great extent the time of the completion of the work. Mr. Parsons thinks that if the depth remains twenty-five feet the canal will be finished in two years. The additional depth will entail the consumption of at least another year of work.

"The canal is not a channel for local traffic," said Mr. Parsons in discussing the company's plans, "but is essentially a ship canal for ocean-going vessels in through service. The figures of proposed depth and

width of the Cape Cod canal show that it will be of the same general character as to size as the great ship canal of the world, and the dimensions are amply sufficient to accommodate all vessels engaged in the coastwise traffic at any stage of tide and permit them to pass in opposite directions without hindrance.

"The increase in our coast traffic of recent years has been stupendous, but the conditions under which it is handled have changed. I refer to the replacement of the old schooner with the tug and barge.

"Today the greater part of the coal traffic between New England, New York, Philadelphia and Norfolk is handled in barges, usually two or three in number, behind an oceangoing tug. Reference to the statistics of the Boston Chamber of Commerce show the extent to which this new method of transportation has superseded the old, and the thing that strikes one in these statistics is the small increase in vessel number and the large increase in vessel tonnage. While the total number of steamers remains substantially the same, the number and the tonnage have increased more than 25 per cent in number.

"The loss of life and property in rounding the cape, where there are an average of 100 foggy days a year, has always been appalling, but it would be greater in the future. A schooner might live through the terrific hurricanes, but a tug could never expect to do so, while the chances of such a vessel passing safely through the treacherous channel of Vineyard sound on a dark night with all its barges in tow are remote in the extreme.

"With the Cape Cod canal established the great source not only of danger but of delay will have been removed and the towing companies can estimate with reasonable certainty upon the time of departure and arrival of their tugs, in fact with a much greater certainty than for a similar shipment by rail."

telling her exact age, we are certain she is in her teens.

After the exposition Columbia's mother traveled throughout the United States with a circus. Later the baby went back to Labrador with her grandfather and grandmother, to live in Eskimo land. Some time after this Columbia's mother went to Labrador as the agent of a company to get Eskimos for the Paris exposition. Columbia and her mother and grandparents crossed the ocean. They also traveled in Africa and throughout Spain.

LIVES IN STYLE IN CAVE

Unique Roost of Rich Farmer on Mountain Top in Oklahoma.

One of the most successful farmers of the Prairie Grove (Okla.) section, who is an active member of the National Farmers' union, has dwelt in a cave for years. It is probably the most palatial cave in the world and is fitted up with all modern conveniences, including hot and cold water, electric fans, electric lights and steam heat. He discovered the cave at the top of a mountain, 1,700 feet high.

It is seventy-eight feet long by twenty-five feet wide, and thirty-two feet high. The walls are of beautiful granite, which has been handsomely polished. The ceiling is forty feet thick. The front of the cave

is of glass, which the owner and occupant, H. S. Mobley, put in, together with hardwood floors. The flues for the cooking range pass out through the mouth of the cave and extend outward a distance of nearly forty feet. Movable screens permit the increase and reduction of rooms at the pleasure of the occupants. A fine spring at the top of the mountain furnishes water through a private system of water works.

This novel dwelling was completed about two years ago. It is approached by a beautiful road ascending the crest of the mountain by easy stages, and the grounds about the cave are kept in perfect condition. The occupants declare that it is the coolest dwelling in summer and the most comfortable in winter, and they have no fear of cyclones, which are frequent in that region. Neither heat nor cold penetrate the solid protection of yards of granite. Mr. Mobley says he will live in the cave for the rest of his life. The cave is in easy driving distance of town.—St. Louis Republic.

Marathon in Plankville.

"Pop," said the farmer's boy, "I have been reading a lot about these Marathons these days and I'd like to enter some."

"All right, my lad," hastened the old man, taking a fresh chew of tobacco. "Just you go down to the woodpile and start a woodchopping Marathon and when you are through you can use the sawdust to play circus. Now, who says I'm not a considerable father?"—Chicago News.

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