

UNCLE SAM'S BARGAIN.

WHAT HE GOT IN THE PANAMA SCRAP HEAP IS VALUED AT MILLIONS.

A Trip Through the French Shops, Warehouses and Yards—Five Hundred Acres of Valuable Machinery—Furnitures in Brass, Copper and Zinc—Steam Draggings and Lock Material of Enormous Values—Hundreds of Locomotives, Thousands of Cars and Cords of Steel Rails—How the French Kept Their Accounts—A Tour of Inspection with the Paymaster Tobey and the Chief Mechanical Engineer.

(Special Correspondence of the Deseret News by Frank G. Carpenter.)

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PANAMA—When Uncle Sam bought the Panama canal for \$40,000,000 he got the right of way across the isthmus, the Panama railroad, a scratch through the mountains, a lot of old buildings and a scrap heap. This letter deals with the scrap heap. In others I may show what he got with the Panama railroad, the hundred of thousands of acres that came with the canal, the millions of dollars' worth of valuable digging represented by the scratch through the mountains, and also the work of the present. Each forms a separate part of Uncle Sam's bargain, the best he has made since he bought Louisiana of Napoleon more than a hundred years ago.

A SEVEN-MILLION-DOLLAR SCRAP HEAP.

In order to show you just what the scrap heap is worth I have gone with Paymaster Tobey, the chief of the department of material and supplies, in a special train over the isthmus, visiting warehouses after warehouses and yard after yard, examining the material as it lies upon the shelves and out in the open. I despair of giving you an adequate idea of a quantity so vast. There are, all told, 135 great storehouses, fifteen enormous warehouses and 41 parks scattered at different points up and down 100 square miles of territory, reaching from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

The contents of the buildings and yards are so great that I venture they would cover, if they could be spread out in one place, a 500-acre farm as deep as your waist, and leave plenty over for a fence twice that high around the edges.

These materials have all been inventoried by the French, and in their balance sheet they are valued at \$20,000,000. This is a book estimate; but our experts tell me that they are really worth one-fourth that amount to us, for use and for sale. In the purchase of the canal this stuff was not counted; but Admiral Walker, the chairman of the commission, insisted that it be thrown in for good measure. As a result, the United States saved the United States just \$7,000,000.

Let me mention some of the larger items on the French balance sheet. The small ones are so many that they cannot be named. There are 273 iron cranes, 800 big pumps of various kinds, 150 rock drills and 140 steam winches. There are 14 bridges, valued at almost \$1,000,000; 10 electric machines, 12 planing machines, 13 punching machines and all sorts of machines for shearing iron, riveting and bolt screwing.

There is a floating drill apparatus valued by the French at over \$30,000, a boring machine at \$10,000, a section dredge worth \$7,500 and other dredges running up into the millions. As to the cars and locomotives, they are of every description. There are 34 American locomotives valued at \$200,000 and 232 Belgian locomotives valued at \$5,000,000, together with a lot of Decauville locomotives for hauling dump cars over the little machinery of the isthmus. There are steel rails enough to lay 174 miles of standard gauge, and more than 65 miles of narrow gauge. There are 5,000 dump cars, the most of which can be used; and there are 5,000 trolleys for carrying dirt away from the canal. The most of the railroad material is good and the dump cars are now being repaired and remodeled. The locomotives, when cleaned and oiled, are found to move all right; and the engineers tell me some of them are even better than any which can be purchased today.

OUR BIG FRENCH DREDGES.

My trip over the canal was made in company with Paymaster E. C. Tobey, the chief of the material and supplies department, Paymaster V. S. Jackson, his assistant, and Mr. Carl A. Strom, the mechanical engineer in charge of all the machinery of the isthmus.

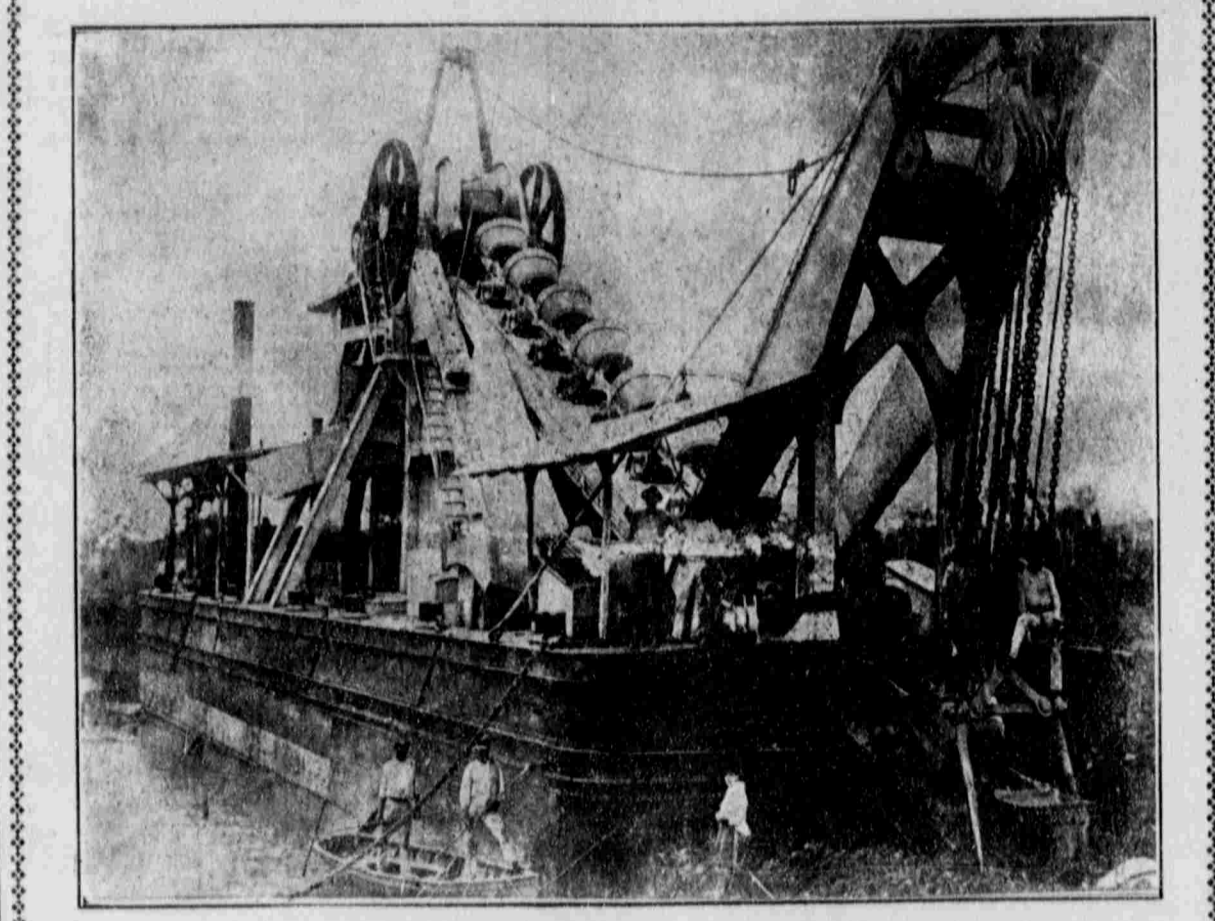
We began at Colon and traveled from station to station, taking plenty of time to go through the larger warehouses and to investigate the condition of the materials there stored. We examined the steam dredges lying out in the open, both at Colon and La Boca. These are now being repaired and they will be doing active work on the canal. At Colon we inspected one dredging vessel made of steel which was 200 feet long and 40 feet wide, and which is worth to Uncle Sam at \$1,500,000. It has three enormous cranes on it, one of which will lift 25 tons. The vessel is equipped with engines and the only repairs needed are at different places in the hull. This is covered with barnacles, which must be scraped off and the holes made by the salt water patched up.

Next this vessel lies a Scotch dredge with a chain of great dredging buckets upon it. It is practically whole and Paymaster Tobey estimates that it is worth about \$100,000. Each bucket will carry a barrel of material. The chain to which the buckets are fastened is made of links weighing, I judge, 100 pounds each.

Standing on this Scotch dredge I counted 40 other vessels belonging to the canal from where I stood. Some were sunk in the water with only their tops showing, others were floating. All are worth all the way from \$50 each for scrap iron up to \$100,000 each, for use in the excavation of the canal. At La Boca, the Pacific end of the canal, we saw three great dredges lying in the mud. Any one of them must have cost in the neighborhood of \$250,000. All are in good condition above the water line and all float at high tide. Some of these are now being treated so as to prevent deterioration until it is determined whether they can be used in the canal work. In addition there are 13 dredges in the neighborhood of \$2,000,000, and there are also several auxiliary vessels. In the La Boca shops a marine engine, which has been dragged up from the bottom of the canal, is being overhauled for use in a steam launch of the quarantine service, and the French boiler-makers are now working there upon a cargo lighter 110 feet long, 24 feet beam and 8 feet in depth, while in the same building other workmen are putting together a steam launch which was brought down from the Columbia cut 12 miles away.

THE SHOES AT COLON.

I despair of describing the warehouses. Those we visited at Colon covered at least 10 acres, some of the buildings being 700 feet long. These buildings are roofed with galvanized



A PART OF OUR GREAT FRENCH SCRAP HEAP. The "City of Paris," Ten Miles From Panama, Original Cost \$300,000.

They are lined with shelves and divided into sections by cases containing all sorts of materials. Some articles are carefully wrapped in paper, and about a cartload of glass chimneys. Along the side walls were bins of nails and screws and above them several car loads of tool handles. In that one warehouse are enough tools to stock the hardware stores of New York state, in addition hogsheads upon hogsheads of zinc tacks for roofing. Paymaster Tobey estimates that there is at least \$250,000 worth of stuff in that warehouse.

10 concrete mixers with stationary engines. These have never been used, and they are equal to just so much money in the making of the canal, as all sorts of dams and other concrete construction are demanded. Mechanical Engineer Strom tells me that two men can in one week fix these machines for actual work, and he says that they will probably mix 100,000 barrels of cement within the next few years. In addition to this material the building contains three span bridges ready to be put across the Changares or some of its tributaries.

FORTUNES IN BRASS AND COPPER.

In one place I saw \$10,000 worth of sheet copper in plates as large as a library table, and farther on piles of zinc and sheets of lead. There are tons of copper bars to be used in the repair of machinery, great quantities of brass and bale upon bale of steel and brass wire. There are warehouses at Ancon which contain similar material, and also of other stations along the line of the railroad. Some of the raw metal on hand is worth from 15 to 20 cents a pound, and it is remarkable that it has not been carried away.

HEAVY MACHINERY WORTH MILLIONS.

Leaving Colon, we walked through acres covered with car wheels and galvanized iron water pipe to the train and went to Monkey Hill. There we visited a storehouse which cost about \$40,000 to build. It is 15 years old, but is in excellent shape both as to roof and floor timbers, and \$2,000 or \$3,000 will put it in thorough repair. Standing at the entrance one sees a great expanse of iron plates, wheels and heavy machinery, every bit of which can be used in our work. There is a vast deal of Eiffel lock stuff which is as good as when it was laid down. It originally cost millions. A railroad track runs through the warehouse, and it has all the facilities for handling heavy materials.

Lying outside of it are thousand of Decauville car wheels, rails and heavy machinery. Inside are shearing machines, pumps and lathes. There are

THE FRENCH ACCOUNT BOOKS.

The idea prevails that the French kept no accounts of anything, that they took no care of their machinery and that everything we received was rusted and rotten. This is not so. The best of their machinery was, for use and cover, much of it was painted with white lead, while coal oil was squirted over bolts, nuts and journal boxes to keep them from rusting.

As to bookkeepers, I doubt whether the French have their equals. I looked yesterday over the ledgers which contain a list of these supplies. The pages are like copper-plate engraving and the system of accounts is perfect. There are eighteen of these books, each as high as a table, as thick as the biggest family Bible and as heavy as a ten-year-old boy. Each is bound with brass plates at the top and bottom, making it look more like the missal of a monastery than a business account book. To give an idea of the size I had Paymaster Jackson hold one of the books open while I photographed it.

Each ledger contains 500 pages. There are 18 books, so that they have, all told, 90,000 pages, all covered with figures. Paymaster Tobey says that duplicates of these books were kept in Paris, and that the hundreds of thousands of items scattered through the store houses, sheds and parks are so carefully labeled to correspond with the ledgers that he can give an order from them and be sure that the supplies will be found in the store house as here registered.

The system of account keeping is much the same as that of the United States navy, and the books are of great value to the material and supplies department, which has to know where everything is and be ready to furnish it at a moment's notice, whether it be a pound of nails, or a pair of scissors, a steam barge or a locomotive.

THE FRENCH BALANCE SHEET.

Before I take you through the shops



THE CANAL SHOPS AT EMPIRE, PANAMA. Some of the Machinery That Uncle Sam Got With His Big Ditch Rights.

yard, many of which are set up and ready for work. Almost none of the machinery has been used since it was painted, and it looks as though it were worth as much as it cost for the machines and supplies.

In an adjoining shop we saw a lot of stationary engines, the excavated dirt being thrown on these belts and then carried out over the banks and then the grounds beyond. It is a curious thing that the French tried to dump the level, and when their canal banks became a level, they carried the stuff over on the banks to the lower level. The Americans will dump in the valleys and will make gravity do much of the work.

Near these engines, standing out in the open, are a large number of stationary engines used for operating trolleys, to carry the dirt, in buckets away from the work. They will be of no use for the purpose for which they were intended, but the mechanics they were made for can do something else with them. There are also hoisting machines lying in the bins, which are in good condition, with the exception of the wood work. Indeed, all of the French machinery is so well made that it will stand the wear and tear of the isthmus much better than ours. The trouble with much of it is that it has become obsolete, new labor and time-saving inventions having taken its place. The result is that a great deal of excellent stuff will have to be thrown on the scrap heap, while parts will be saved to repair new machines.

There is, however, much machinery here which is as good as any in use today. Mr. Strom showed me an engine-lathe worth \$700, which is equal in value to the same size one made, and a punching shear worth \$1,000, and a lathe worth \$500, and which is as good as any in use.

THE CANAL SHOPS AT EMPIRE, PANAMA. Some of the Machinery That Uncle Sam Got With His Big Ditch Rights.

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- 25c smooth iron camp kettles with tin covers, regular price, 35c; sale price, 18c
- 3 qt. smooth iron camp kettles with tin covers, regular price, 55c; sale price, 28c
- All sizes retined covered scoops, regular price, 20c to 50c; sale price, 10c to 25c
- All sizes retined covered scoops, regular price, 20c to 50c; sale price, 10c to 25c
- Shallow jelly tins, size 9x12, regular price, 15c; sale price, 8c
- Tin cupboards, painted, regular price, 75c; sale price, 38c
- Tin basins, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18 inch, regular price, 5c; sale price, 2c
- Nickel plated range tea kettles, regular price, \$1.25; sale price, .48c
- Cake cutters, regular price, 5c; sale price, 2c
- Doughnut cutters, regular price, 5c; sale price, 2c
- Biscuit cutters, regular price, 5c; sale price, 2c
- 2 qt. drinking cups, regular price, 7c; sale price, 3c
- 1/2 sheet graters, regular price, 5c; sale price, 2c
- 1/4 sheet graters, regular price, 5c; sale price, 2c
- 2 qt. graduated measures with marks pt., qt., 2 qt., etc., regular price, 15c; sale price, 7c
- No. 98 range tea kettles, tin, regular price, 50c; sale price, 25c
- No. 97 range tea kettles, tin, regular price, 40c; sale price, 18c
- 1 qt. milk kettles with side handle, regular price, 20c; sale price, 7c
- 2 qt. milk kettles with side handle, regular price, 25c; sale price, 9c
- 3 qt. milk kettles with side handle, regular price, 35c; sale price, 14c
- 4 qt. milk kettles with side handle, regular price, 45c; sale price, 18c
- 6 qt. milk kettles with side handle, regular price, 55c; sale price, 24c
- 8 qt. milk kettles with side handle, regular price, 65c; sale price, 28c
- 1 qt. round covered pails, with wire handles, regular price, 10c; sale price, 5c
- 2 qt. round covered pails, with wire handles, regular price, 15c; sale price, 7c
- 3 qt. round covered pails, with wire handles, regular price, 20c; sale price, 10c
- 4 qt. round covered pails, with wire handles, regular price, 25c; sale price, 13c

GARDEN TOOLS, Etc.

Ladies' garden hoes, all steel, regular price, 50c; sale price, 25c

Weeding rake and hoe combination, all steel, regular price, 50c; sale price, 25c

No. 2 Routh rice root scrub brushes, regular price, 10c; sale price, 5c

All bristle stove brushes, regular price, 25c; sale price, 12c

All bristle stove brushes, regular price, 35c; sale price, 18c

No. 190 All white bristle counter brushes, regular price, \$1.00; sale price, 50c

No. 170 Gray bristle counter brushes, regular price, 75c; sale price, 42c

No. 58 Gray bristle counter brushes, regular price, 50c; sale price, 28c

No. 50 common bristle counter brushes, regular price, 50c; sale price, 26c

13 inch chopping bowls, hardwood, regular price, 15c; sale price, 8c

13 inch chopping bowls, hardwood, regular price, 25c; sale price, 16c

16 inch chopping bowls, hardwood, regular price, 35c; sale price, 21c

17 inch chopping bowls, hardwood, regular price, 50c; sale price, 33c

19 inch chopping bowls, hardwood, regular price, 60c; sale price, 35c

No. 9 Lightning churns, 2 gal., regular price, \$3.50; sale price, \$2.11

Butter paddles, straight and curved, regular price, 5c; sale price, 3c

1 lb. round butter mould, regular price, 25c; sale price, 11c

2 lb. round butter mould, regular price, 40c; sale price, 18c

Dash churns, best cedar, 4 gal., regular price, \$1.35; sale price, .55c

Dash Churn, best cedar, regular price, \$1.35; sale price, .74c

Dash churns, best cedar, 6 gal., regular price, \$1.45; sale price, .69c

Best Jet knife sharpeners, regular price, 35c; sale price, 18c

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