

Behind the Scenes at Panama.

Inside Stories of the Revolution Which Established the Isthmian Republic and Gave Uncle Sam His Canal.

President Amador's Trip to Washington—"It Will Occur at Six o'clock"—What Our Gunboats Did—How the Panama Railroad Helped—Where the Bribe Money Came From—Some Men Who Made Fortunes Out of the Canal and the Revolution.

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

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DID Uncle Sam forget the revolution by which Panama broke away from its mother country, Colombia, and make it possible for us to buy the isthmian canal? The truthful answer to this question will never be given. It is known only to the leading officials of Panama and the United States, and they will not tell. I heard a story of a man who, during my stay on the isthmus, which show how Panama attempted to get the assistance of the United States and some which indicate that she succeeded. Whether the stories are true or not, they are certainly interesting. They came to me from men entitled to credence; but as I am not permitted to mention their names they must be taken for what they are worth.

PRESIDENT AMADOR VISITS WASHINGTON.

The first story is as to how Dr. Amador, now president of the Panama republic, received the assurance that Uncle Sam would come to the aid of Panama if she declared her independence. The incident occurred shortly after Colombia had refused to ratify the sale of the canal by the French to the United States for \$40,000,000. Panama feared that this refusal would cause our Congress to adopt Nicaragua as the place for its trans-isthmian railway, its leading officials saw the necessity for quick action. They decided to break away from Colombia if they could get the support of the United States, and Dr. Amador was chosen to go to Washington and sound the authorities. He came and called upon the secretary of war, but could get no satisfaction. Secy. Taft manifested an interest in his proposition, but he was non-committal. He said:

"There is yet no breach of friendship between the United States and Colombia and we can do nothing now." This was so all as to start and started back to Panama. On his way home, however, he called upon Mr. Lindo of Pina, Neponse & Co., in New York, and he was there advised to wait over a steamer to confer with Mr. Bunau-Varilla of the French canal company as to the situation. He did so and at the conference Mr. Varilla, so the story goes, told him that if he would agree that the new republic would make him Varilla, its first minister to the United States, he would see that his deal went through. To this Dr. Amador agreed, and Bunau-Varilla started for Washington. It is alleged he had a private talk there with President Roosevelt, and that our president, while not making any positive promises, gave such indications that Bunau-Varilla concluded the United States would help

Panama when the time for action came. At least he satisfied Dr. Amador to that effect, and the latter returned to the isthmus. A short time later, the news came that the Colombian government had appointed new officials for its Panama state. This meant that if anything was to be done it must be done quickly, so the revolutionists had another meeting and at that independence was finally decided upon.

CLUMSY CABLEING.

In the meantime cables were flying back and forth between Washington and Panama. The situation was serious, and as the story goes, the Panama revolutionists communicated directly with the officials at Washington. One cable translated from the code read:

"Where are American battleships?" The reply came back in another code word which meant, "Will be in Panama within four days." This cable was sent through Bunau-Varilla, and sure enough, four days later the first vessel arrived. The day following its arrival the revolutionists communicated directly with the officials at Washington. One cable translated from the code read:

"Will be at 6 o'clock." He was only an hour out of the way, for independence was formally declared at 7 o'clock that night.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

In the meantime the Colombian government had received an inkling of the proposed revolution. This came, so it is believed, through the Bishop of Panama, who made a journey to Cartagena about that time. It was it once decided to nip the plot in the bud by appointing new officials. Troops were ordered to Panama, and the officers sent with them had instructions to execute Messrs. Amador, Obaldia, Tomas Arias, Federico Boyd, Augustin Arango and others. This was duly reported at Colon in advance of the arrival of troops, so that these men knew that if Panama did not become independent they would lose their heads. They had already organized their army with Gen. Huertas at its head, and were ready to get at the time the troops came. The Colombian soldiers numbered 450 men, three generals and six colonels, but it was only the officers who came to Panama on the first train, leaving the soldiers to follow.

The officers arrived at 10 o'clock. They were met by the state officials and treated with honor. No mention of revolution was made, and Colombians and Panamanians dined together at the



Photographed for the Saturday "News."

THE PANAMA JUNTA.

Or Board of Revolutionists Who Led the Independence of Panama.

President's palace. After dinner the Colombian generals made a demand that the Panamanian army be turned over to them, and they showed their authority from the government at Bogota. The Panamanian officials pretended to comply and all went to the fort where Gen. Huertas was in command. The general ordered the troops out and the Colombian officials were ready to take charge. They were about to do so when Huertas raised his hand and the soldiers surrounded the Colombians. They were told they were under arrest and were marched off to prison. This was done and the revolution was accomplished without bloodshed, or without the direct intervention of the American gunboats.

HOW THE PANAMA RAILROAD HELPED.

The fact that the Colombian troops did not get to Panama was largely due

to Col. Shaler, then superintendent of the Panama railroad. Col. Shaler knew that the Panamanians intended to rebel; but his railroad company was indebted to Colombia for its franchise, and he had to maintain the status quo. The government of the charter might be annulled, Col. Shaler was at the same time a good American citizen, and as such wanted Panama to succeed and Uncle Sam to get the canal. The situation required diplomacy and tact, and Col. Shaler rose to the occasion. He evidently knew that our gunboats were coming, and that if he could keep the soldiers for a day or so in Colon, Panama's independence might become a reality. For this reason he got the officers to make their trip across the isthmus on the first train, intimating that the troops would follow on a special train an hour later. The officers agreed to this and started off. As soon as they left, a special was ordered back to the yards and the cars reconnected. There was much telephoning and telegraphing on behalf of both parties, but the soldiers were kept at Colon, notwithstanding the officers left there told Col. Shaler

that if the train was not ready within two hours the troops would charge the city and kill every American in it.

OUR MARINES TO THE FRONT.

Our gunboat, the Nashville, was at this time in the harbor and its commander, W. M. Hunter, had been notified by Col. Shaler that there was likely to be trouble. He had told Capt. Hunter that if the American flag should be raised upon his house, it would be a signal for the marines to come to his support. When the soldiers threatened to fire upon the Americans, Col. Shaler hoisted his flag and sent to the docks. He had barely reached there before Capt. Hunter landed with a company of 24 marines. Col. Shaler told his story, watching Capt. Hunter anxiously to see how he would take it. If he should refuse to assume the responsibility Shaler realized that it was all up with Panama for the troops could not be held back longer. As he concluded Capt. Hunter said:

"Well, colonel, the only thing I see to do is to fortify the freight depot. You get what men you can, and with

them and the marines I think we can prevent the cars from going. This was done. The marines took the station and piled the cotton bales lying in front of them. Col. Shaler ordered his men from the railroad shops, and in a short time there were 80 men assembled ready to fight. In the meantime the battle of diplomacy was going on. The officers had already been arrested and word was sent from Panama that the troops might come if they wished. This was in the evening, and Col. Shaler, on the ground that he dared not risk his cars and men carrying the soldiers across the isthmus after dark, demanded that they remain until morning. They waited, but waited. In the meantime the lights of a second and a third American gunboat appeared in the harbor of Colon and with them more American marines. The Colombian troops then saw that the game was up. They decided to submit, especially as they were promised by the revolutionists \$50,000 in gold if they did so. They took the money and sailed back to Colombia.

WHERE THE BRIBE MONEY CAME FROM.

The story of the bribe money is also interesting. It was furnished by Col. Shaler, but not directly, for if it had been in cash he would have been caught. It might have caused the railroad the loss of its charter. The revolutionists knew that he had the money in gold, and also that they could not get the soldiers in anything else. Col. Shaler at first refused to give up the gold, but said he would sell it to his Panama banker, a private party, for a New York draft, if that could be arranged. This was done by telegraph, the bankers existing that they would take the gold and give drafts for it. Upon this the gold was handed over to the banker's agent at Colon and the agent in turn gave it to Capt. Hunter, who saw that it reached the right parties.

The troops having received their money, collected on the wharf and were stowed, refusing to go on the Royal Mail steamer, which was to take them home, until their officers should arrive from Panama. They held out until 8 o'clock that night, when they took ship and steamed away. Their departure closed the revolution. Panama was a republic, and as a result which gave us the ten-mile strip and right to build the canal.

MEN WHO MADE BIG MONEY.

In national movements such as the creation of a new republic and the selling of a great property like that of the Panama canal many individuals must profit. The one who made most out of the canal sale is supposed to be Mr. William Nelson Cromwell, the attorney for the French Canal company and the Panama Railway company. It was he who engineered the bills by which Panama was chosen over Nicaragua through Congress, and he to a large extent aided in the bringing about of Panama's independence. The group here is that he received from the French Canal company \$2,000,000 out of the

\$40,000,000 which the United States paid them and from the Panama republic \$1,000,000 out of the \$10,000,000 which Uncle Sam paid for the canal zone and his rights there. If these reports are true he received a total of \$3,000,000 in good, hard gold coin, and this money came in a lump. Mr. Cromwell is still attorney for the Panama government, and his relations to the canal administration are close. Mr. Bunau-Varilla is said to have made a fortune out of the sale, and other French agents to have received large sums.

Nearly every resident of Panama has profited more or less from our purchase of the canal and the success of the revolution. Values of all kinds have risen. Business is better than it has been since the palmiest days of the French excavation and money is again plentiful on the isthmus of Panama. All the officers and soldiers who took part in the revolution received more than double pay for the service. The night after independence was declared, some leading bankers of Panama were directed by the new government to furnish money to the soldiers. The officials then gave checks on this bank for the officers and men according to rank, some of which were for \$1,000, \$2,000 and \$5,000 each. Gen. Huertas was offered \$50,000 in gold. He refused it, saying that if he took it it might be considered as a bribe. His scruples vanished when it was again offered to him as a birthday present six months later, and he spent part of the money in a trip to Europe.

Speaking of Gen. Huertas, the commander-in-chief of the Panama army after the war closed he became an elephant on the hands of the government. He troops worshiped him for a time, he tried to dictate to the government. Later on he was removed to the station of the army and to his own retirement, receiving therefore a salary of \$500 a month as general of the army to be called forth to command the troops in case of need.

Gen. Huertas is now about twenty-five years old. He entered the Panamanian army at twelve as a bugler and lost his arm during one of the revolutions. He has now retired to his country place at Araya Dulce, situated about twelve hours from Panama by sailing vessel. He has a large cattle ranch at that place and is also experimenting in mining. He is a brave man, but is said to be ignorant and uneducated. It is believed that his salary will be abolished after a while. Today the little army of 200, which brought about the Panamanian independence, has been turned into a police force of 500. Their guns have been taken away and they are armed chiefly with clubs. These policemen receive \$50 a month in silver.

As to the salaries of the chief officials they are not high in comparison with those of Americans, and they are paid in silver. The president receives \$15,000 a year, the cabinet ministers each \$9,000 a year, and the president's private secretary in the neighborhood of \$2,500 per month.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

What Will Be the Destiny of New Mexico?

With a Splendid Soil and Climate and With an Area Greater Than All New England With New York and New Jersey Thrown In, the National Irrigation Act May Make it an Enormously Rich State.

Special Correspondence.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 24.—What may be the destiny of New Mexico? There she lies in the heart of arid America, 122,460 square miles of broad plains, rugged mountains and sage brush deserts; greater in extent than all New Eng-

land and valley. When New Mexico became a part of the United States fully one-third of its area was included in Mexican and Spanish land grants, which for years afterwards were unconfirmed and therefore paid no taxes and were not available to settlers. The Indians and their Mexican neighbors were irrigating the few crops which

entire farms.

A FICKLE FLOW.

Some idea of the erratic character of the stream may be gained by the following table, which gives the discharge in second feet for a period of eight years at the gaging station at El Paso, Texas:



TOP OF PROJECTED DAM.

THE ENGLE DAM SITE.

Showing Rio Grande at Low Water Stage, and Photographed for the Deseret News.

FLOW OF THE RIO GRANDE AT EL PASO, TEXAS.

Year.	DISCHARGE IN SECOND FEET.				Zero flow.
	Maxi-mum.	Mini-mum.	Mean.	9 days.	
1887	17,000	.....	1,871	8 days.	
1888	9,500	.....	923	0 "	
1889	3,900	.....	321	1 "	
1890	3,350	.....	224	23 "	
1891	3,380	.....	400	170 "	
1892	2,140	.....	70	102 "	
1893	18,970	.....	1,429	17 "	
1894	17,700	.....	649	151 "	

The question of water storage was further complicated by the enormous quantities of silt or sediment carried by the river and the insecure founda-

tion for dams. In private and corporate interests studied the situation, some insurmountable difficulty either in the engineering work or financial was always encountered. And so the amount of water available became less and less, and the land enriched by ages of silt-laden floods became more and more desolate. The National Irrigation act was the herald of New Mexico's redemption. It was the signal for those modern magicians, Uncle Sam's engineers, to grapple with the forces of nature, to land and water! What potent force to conquer with! Already New Mexico is preparing to swing in line in the forward procession of the age. Down near Roswell, 10,000 acres of land will be supplied with water in 1906, and plans are being formulated by which the entire Pecos valley eventually will be brought under a comprehensive system of irrigation. Investigations are also being carried on in the Las Platas valley and in the vicinity of Las Vegas, and the underground waters of the territory are being carefully studied.

ENORMOUS IRRIGATION DAM.

But by far the most interesting work in New Mexico is the project designed to reclaim the Rio Grande valley in the southern portion of the territory. In addition to the obstacles already mentioned any scheme to reclaim these lands is complicated by interstate and international questions which require careful handling to avoid friction between citizens residing in this portion of the valley. The engineers have found a suitable reservoir site near Engle, and a wonderful dam 255 feet in height from bedrock to top of parapet walls, has been planned. The reservoir thus created will be 40 miles long and will have a capacity of 2,000,000 acre feet, (an acre-foot is one acre one foot deep). An ingenious arrangement of sluice gates will provide for disposal of silt from time to time, and as the reservoir will be relatively deep in proportion to its surface area, there will not be excessive evaporation. The Las Cruces system will be used for distribution of purposes, and the main canal extended along the valley on the east side of the river. Water may be taken across the river in places to generate the west side electric power, generated by drops in time to time, and as the reservoir will be relatively deep in proportion to its surface area, there will not be excessive evaporation. The Las Cruces system will be used for distribution of purposes, and the main canal extended along the valley on the east side of the river. Water may be taken across the river in places to generate the west side electric power, generated by drops in time to time, and as the reservoir will be relatively deep in proportion to its surface area, there will not be excessive evaporation. The Las Cruces system will be used for distribution of purposes, and the main canal extended along the valley on the east side of the river. 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