

American Horses Routed Into

Lubbers' Coal Hopper

In Past Few Months More Than
Ninety Thousand Horses Have
Been Exported From
Newport News Alone.



The Newport Horse Pens Cover Eight Acres and
Shed 3500 Animals Destined for the Front.

OREGON SENDS HORSES TO WAR.

Since last Fall shortly after the opening of the war in Europe, horse buyers representing the belligerent countries have gone through every state in the Union buying up what available horses they could for shipment to the front, and in this general combing of the land of horses, Oregon has contributed her share.

It is estimated that since last Fall more than 6000 horses have been shipped from Eastern Oregon and the Willamette Valley by Middle West buyers for ultimate shipment to France and England. Early in the Fall the buyers were picking up cavalry stock almost exclusively. Now the demand is for heavy, chunky horses suitable for artillery service.

ing headquarters of one buyer, who works "at large," setting up his market wherever the animals he seeks chance to be collected.

The price paid for the "gunners" averages \$200. Twice as many of them are purchased as of transport drafts or cavalry mounts, because of the greater slaughter among the batteries. An average of \$175 is paid for a good cavalry mount. Yet these figures are not fixed at standards, as the buyer uses his own discretion in the matter of the prices he pays.

Whether a horse will go into the artillery or the troops, so far as the British are concerned, is determined by his height, the gunners standing 16.3 hands high, and built proportionately, while the troop horses may be of rangier lines, up to 16 hands.

At the point of purchase a horse, he destined for the troops or the guns, entrains with hundreds of his fellows for Newport News. Days afterward, having been shunted onto a siding, somewhere near the big stockyards of

the port, which cover nearly eight acres and shed 3500 animals, he comes down the long runway from the box car. He is unsheltered and untrammelled, yet he wears the insignia which marks him for the slaughter—a brand arrow, curiously similar to that emblem of England's Dartmoor prison—on his near quarter, and a huge "U," showing that he came from the United States, on his off quarter or shoulder.

Some of his fellows are marked with numbers branded into their hoofs. A single glance at the "U" immediately from what depot the horse wearing it came, for every buyer employs an individual variation of the letter.

From the livestock trains the horses are berded into the stockyard pens, each one of which holds just a cartload of animals, where a committee of official veterinarians, examining every one, making sure that his long cattle-car jaunt has not injured him and also verifying the judgment of the buyer, for every horse must be cardinally

The Rembrandt,
First Horse-ship
to Sail, and Victim
of an Incendiary
Fire.



Loading Horses
on a British Ship
for Glasgow.

Type of Horse
Desired for Cavalry
Service.

sound in wind and limb. Any one of the more serious of equine troubles, including the slightest symptom of spavin, ring-bone, side-bone or catarrh, disqualifies the animal showing it for which reasons alone 10 per cent of the animals offered to the buyers in the field are rejected.

In making their examinations the veterinarians are careful to look to the general condition of the animals, there being always a certain small percentage of them suffering from some minor sickness or the bad effects of train accidents.

But even after the ailing ones are "culled out" and sent to the hospital for treatment, those passed as sound are not yet ready to go aboard the ship. First of all they must recuperate

from their long rail journey, and so they are permitted to rest, sometimes a few days and often for weeks, being given special attention and scientific feedings calculated to best aid them toward the recovery of their full powers.

When at last a horse evidences a condition as nearly perfect as the experts can produce, he and his fellows are taken to the haltering pens, for until this time the horse has had not so much as a single rope upon him. These special halters are adjusted so that—in the case of many horses purchased by France—it is only necessary when the animal reaches the other side to snap two straps to his head-stalls and make him instantly ready

animals are viciously dangerous, look them over.

There are many occasions when, as though possessing an uncanny foresight of the fact which awaits him, the animal balks at the foot of the runway. If so, a running nose, which can be pulled to excruciating tightness at the first sign of balkiness, is hurriedly adjusted about his loins, and with five or six negro stevedores hauling on his halter ropes, and a like number trailing along behind, he goes protestingly up and disappears into the hold, for brave, indeed, is the horse which can withstand the tightening of the loin larlet.

In this way the British have already sent more than 40,000 horses from Newport News, the other 50,000 having been divided between the French and the Belgians, who shipped their first boat-load a few weeks ago. Although many ports are quite as active in the horse trade as Newport News, the most recent horse census shows that plenty of cavalry mounts are still available, and no shortage threatens.

When the call first came for the shipment of thousands of American horses to the embattled armies abroad, liners which could be transformed into horse ships were in great demand. Freighters, immigrant ships, tramp steamers and the like found easy charter, and, with stalls built upon them wherever space offered, they entered the trade.

A score of them have made Newport News their port of loading, among them the Donaldson liners, Casandra, Athalia and Laconia; the big sister ships Mechanician and Michigan, the so-called "Anglo" boats, the Anglo-Californian, the Anglo-Columbian, the Anglo-Mexican and the Anglo-Baxon, as well as the Victorian, Winniefrigan and the Leylian. In many of these ships the stalls, which afford just room enough for a horse to stand, are built in five tiers, from the keel to the boat-deck.

In rough weather the horses are kept standing during the entire voyage, which usually covers from 12 to 15 days. If the animals become exhausted, slings are rigged under them. In fair weather, however, the partition boards are very often removed and the horses permitted to lie down. A shipload of horses usually averages about \$60.

When a horse ship once clears the capes, her fate is on the knees of the gods of war and tempest and disaster until she reaches her destination. She cannot hold to any definite sea lane, but must lay her course according to the conditions which her skipper may possess, to take him beyond the hunting grounds of predatory raiders.

As yet the English have never lost a cargo of horses, but even if the ship escapes the threat of commerce destroyers and the wrath of the sea, it is not without the loss of the Rembrandt, from Baltimore and her return to Newport News four days later; her afterhold gutted by incendiary fire, half her horses dead, and her crew exhausted with their fight against the flames.

BUILDING OF THE PANAMA CANAL

(Continued from Page 2)

upon request, and finally, that they should not be required to continue on duty when in their judgment they needed rest.

After giving a hearing to the committee and considering the demands in detail, Mr. Stevens declined to make any modification in the conditions of employment, to allow any pay for overtime, or to grant any privileges not accorded other classes of employees. So far as pay was concerned, he agreed to amend the existing rates by making the pay of qualified engineers \$210 and qualified conductors \$190 per month, specifically that by qualified engineers and conductors he meant men who were fitted, in the opinion of operating officials, by experience, character, and judgment, to handle trains on the main line of the Panama Railroad and who could pass satisfactory examination in standard or Panama Railroad operating rules.

This settlement of the question was not acceptable to the men. I arrived on the Isthmus on the 12th of March, 1907, and a committee of steam-shovel men and of locomotive engineers and conductors met with me to discuss the matter.

The steam-shovel men demanded the increase of pay already noted and the locomotive engineers adhered to their demands, with the proviso that the pay of locomotive engineers was to be the same as that fixed for steam-shovel men, and that the rate for the States locomotive engineers, as a rule, received higher rates of pay than the steam-shovel men. The conductors contended that their responsibility was greater than that of the engineers, especially in work train service, and that they should receive compensation equal to that of the engineers, if not greater. Another question raised was their right to a fair and impartial hearing, with representation, in case of discharge or punishment.

As the whole matter had been referred to the authorities in Washington and was to be taken up by the Secretary of War on his approaching visit, action was declined.

Secretary Taft Takes a Hand.

Secretary Taft arrived on the Isthmus on March 30, 1907, and gave a hearing to the various committees a few days later. The reasons which they advanced for the increase of pay demanded were based on the discomfort which service on the Isthmus imposed, due to distance from home and friends; the utter lack of usual and rational amusement; greater risk of illness and death, due to climatic conditions; hard service; a humid climate and high temperature, which undermined the health and unfitted the men for work elsewhere; the risk of personal injury due to the negligence of superiors, for which no damages were recoverable against the Government, and that prior to coming to the Isthmus they had been promised a gradual increase of pay with length of service. They brought up also the method of dismissals and suspensions without a hearing, claiming this was often unjust and the result of spite or prejudice.

While a system of promotion had

been arranged, by which the men could be advanced from steam-shovel firemen through the grades of crane-man to engineer, thus offering a substantial increase with each advancement, and similarly from trainman to conductor, some of the steam shovel and transportation men had not received such advancement and felt that there was no hope of any increase no matter how long they might remain on the Isthmus.

When Secretary Taft informed them at the conclusion of the hearing that he would take the matter under consideration, advising them of his conclusion from Cuba, where he was going, the committee of steam-shovel men insisted on an immediate settlement of the question. They had waited, they said, several months for an adjustment of the matter and did not intend to submit to a longer delay.

The Secretary of War replied that if that was their attitude, if they could not wait until he returned to the question and confer with the President, he would drop the matter there and then and they could take whatever course they pleased. This had its effect, and the committee conformed to await the decision which Mr. Taft thought should reach the Isthmus by the middle of the month.

Mr. Stevens and Mr. Bierd, the general manager of the Panama Railroad, opposed increase in wages for steam-shovel men, on the ground that they were already receiving a very material advance over the average paid for similar service in the States. They recommended such an increase in the pay of transportation men as would put the locomotive engineers on a par with steam-shovel engineers. This would take care of the pay for this class of employees, but their claim for overtime could not be allowed, for, under a ruling of the Treasury Department, the monthly or annual pay of an employee is full compensation for all service rendered and he is entitled to receive nothing additional.

An eight-hour day for transportation service could not be conceded, for time must be consumed between leaving the engine-house and reaching the shovel, and a similar allowance was necessary at the close of the work, otherwise the shovels would not be able to work eight hours, and these must be the determining factors. The arrangement then in force by which overtime was credited and days off allowed when the work permitted seemed the only solution of this issue, if any consideration were given it.

Increased Pay for Length of Service.

If the transportation crews received an increase in pay while that of the steam-shovel men remained unchanged, it was anticipated that trouble would result, and Mr. Taft thought something should be done for them, assuming that the suggested solution was the outcome. It appeared during the hearing that the force was constantly changing; that difficulty was experienced in retaining men for any length of time, thereby causing increased expenditure in securing new employees; and the Secretary of War thought that the Gov-

ernment might well afford, in its own interests as well as the interests of employees, to pay a premium for length of service. Under such an arrangement there would be probably an increase for some of the steam-shovel men, and others could look forward with certainty to securing it if they continued in the service for a sufficient length of time. If this were to be done, the system of longevity in the army was suggested, making the increase a percentage on the basic rate paid, as more satisfactory than a lump sum. If a parity of wages was to be maintained between locomotive engineers and steam-shovel engineers, it naturally followed that if such a provision was to be made for the latter it must be granted to the former, and if length of service was to be recognized and rewarded in certain classes then it should be made applicable to all classes of employees.

The minor points raised by the committee relative to conditions of employment were questions which affected all employees, and should be left for determination on the Isthmus and settled by the commission. Furthermore, these matters affecting the wage scale had been under discussion since January, causing unrest, dissatisfaction and discontent, and naturally the efficiency of the force was affected.

It was held that all such questions should be settled on the ground, where all the conditions were known and understood, at the time they came up; but as long as a recourse could be had to the authorities in Washington, it would be useless to attempt an adjustment with a view to prompt settlement unless the men were given what they demanded, for, if denied, they would immediately take it to Washington. As, after April 1, 1907, the members of the commission were to reside on the Isthmus, the handling and final settlement of all questions of employment should be left with the commission, thereby not only avoiding the condition of affairs that existed, but materially strengthening the hands of the Isthmus authorities. It was also arranged that provision would be made for giving the men hearings in case of dismissals or other complaints.

Secretary Taft's Decision.

Secretary Taft left for Cuba, and on April 7 directed that one of the Panama Railroad steamers should put in at Guantanamo, Cuba, to pick up an important letter. By cable advice, it appeared that this was to be a copy of a letter addressed to the President, making recommendation in the questions at issue, and, if approved, the men would be advised of the decision by April 16 or 17. The decision, however, was not received until May 6, in the form of a cable message giving the changes that were to be made in the letter sent from Guantanamo, and so modified it was sent out to the committees.

By its terms no increase in wages would be given to the steam-shovel crews, but the qualified locomotive engineers were to be paid \$210 and

qualified conductors \$190 a month, nine hours to constitute a day's work, all time in excess to be credited and to be allowed in days of eight hours as additional leave, or to be taken on the Isthmus. The time so credited was denominated "layover days." Overtime for steam-shovel crews was to be compensated in the same way. Longevity was to be granted on the basis of 5 per cent increase for the first year's service and 3 per cent increase for each succeeding year, and was made applicable to all skilled workmen, engineers, conductors and mechanics.

When a corrected copy of the letter was received in due course by mail it showed that the percentage of increase for the first year had been fixed at 3 per cent instead of 5 per cent, but conditions on the Isthmus at the time did not warrant any modification in the rate that had been announced.

There was considerable dissatisfaction with the decision. The men charged bad faith on the part of the officials, for it was assumed that we were holding up the decision which they were to have had the middle of the previous month, and at a meeting of the locomotive engineers and conductors on May 4 it was resolved that unless a reply was received on the sixth day they would resign in a body. The decision in regard to the steam-shovel men was not satisfactory to them, though by a vote of the order they decided to continue in the service.

Steam Shovel Men Quit and Resign.

The following day the steam-shovel men from Gatun, learning that they were not to get a five per cent increase, which was their first information, resigned, and endeavored to secure similar action by the men working in Culebra Cut. With such a condition of affairs it was not willing to announce that a mistake had been made and change the longevity rate for the first year, and so it was allowed to stand at 5 per cent.

The men at Gatun decided to quit at the close of the day's work, and, being unable to communicate with those on other parts of the work, went over on an early train to Culebra and proceeded through the Cut, where the shovels were working, and urged the men to leave. This excited one of the commissioners, who feared that violence would result as well as damage to the equipment and other public property, and he had instructed the chief clerk of the chairman's office to telephone to the marines stationed on the Isthmus to patrol the Cut, remove the agitators, and protect Government property. Fortunately, the commanding officer refused to comply unless the request came from the office at noon and learned of this state of affairs the chief clerk was instructed to countermand his request, for no emergency existed warranting such action, and the move was ill-advised and might be productive of trouble.

That night another meeting of the steam-shovel men was called which resulted in a vote to leave, and out of a total of 48 steam shovels that had been at work, in two days' time only 13 shovels were left with crews. A large majority of the men had no desire to leave, but feared that should they remain it would work to their disadvantage after they left the Isthmus, so that

some of them asked permission to be absent until the agitators left the Isthmus or they were able to determine the course they should pursue; as a result, the majority left the service.

The mechanical trades had received longevity, which was entirely unexpected; the transportation crews had received a substantial increase in pay, so that the sentiment was against the steam-shovel men, and numerous applications were received for the vacancies created. Crews were obtained from the mechanical trades and in some instances from crews with mechanical training. The disturbances affected the work and reduced the output for the time being, but the action taken had a wholesome effect on all classes of employees, for the steam shovel crews had appeared to be indispensable, yet the decision showed conclusively that they were not indispensable, and the men could not tie up the whole work.

Placed in Hands of Commission.

By the action of the President in approving the recommendations of the Secretary of War, all questions regarding conditions of employment, the hearings that the men demanded in case of dissatisfaction, as well as all future decisions on the subject, were left to the commission—though it was intimated that in good faith the men should receive the privileges which were promised them at the time they entered the service.

After matter had settled down a joint committee composed of engineers and conductors asked for a hearing, and thereat presented a written agreement which they had drawn up embodying the wage scale and such additional recommendations of the Secretary of War as had received the approval of the President, with the wish that the agreement be signed by myself as chairman of the commission and president of the Panama Railroad. They had already affixed their signatures, and under the provisions of the agreement it was to terminate on 30 days' notice given by either party. They also desired to take up the grievances of some of their members.

I declined to sign the agreement, for, though it was in accord with former practice, it was not in accord with Government practice, and the Canal, as Government work, so far as concerned the various classes of employees, was an "open shop." All the locomotive engineers and conductors on the Isthmus were not members of the local orders. Furthermore, the wages and conditions properly made would be received, and were accepted or not as an individual seeking employment might decide for himself. I also informed the committee that it was my duty to recommend for increases in pay or other concessions, and thereafter none such would be given any consideration. Requests, however, would be received, and acted on according to their merits.

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When the cattlemen, who had refused to venture north, but Captain Edlin and his officers, armed with the fire axes with which they had been attempting to chop their way through the deck to the fire, held them at bay.

But when once the officers quelled the incipient mutiny among the cattlemen, driving them back from the hose and holding them in check by fear of personal violence, they drove the sweepings of the waterfront to the hose lines, and held them there, working hour after long hour until the fire was under control.

With the ship headed back on a course for Newport News the fire was extinguished after thirty hours, although it was necessary to flood the after hold with 17 feet of water. One hundred and 10 horses died before port was reached, and before they cleared again 244 more had succumbed to the effects of the fire.