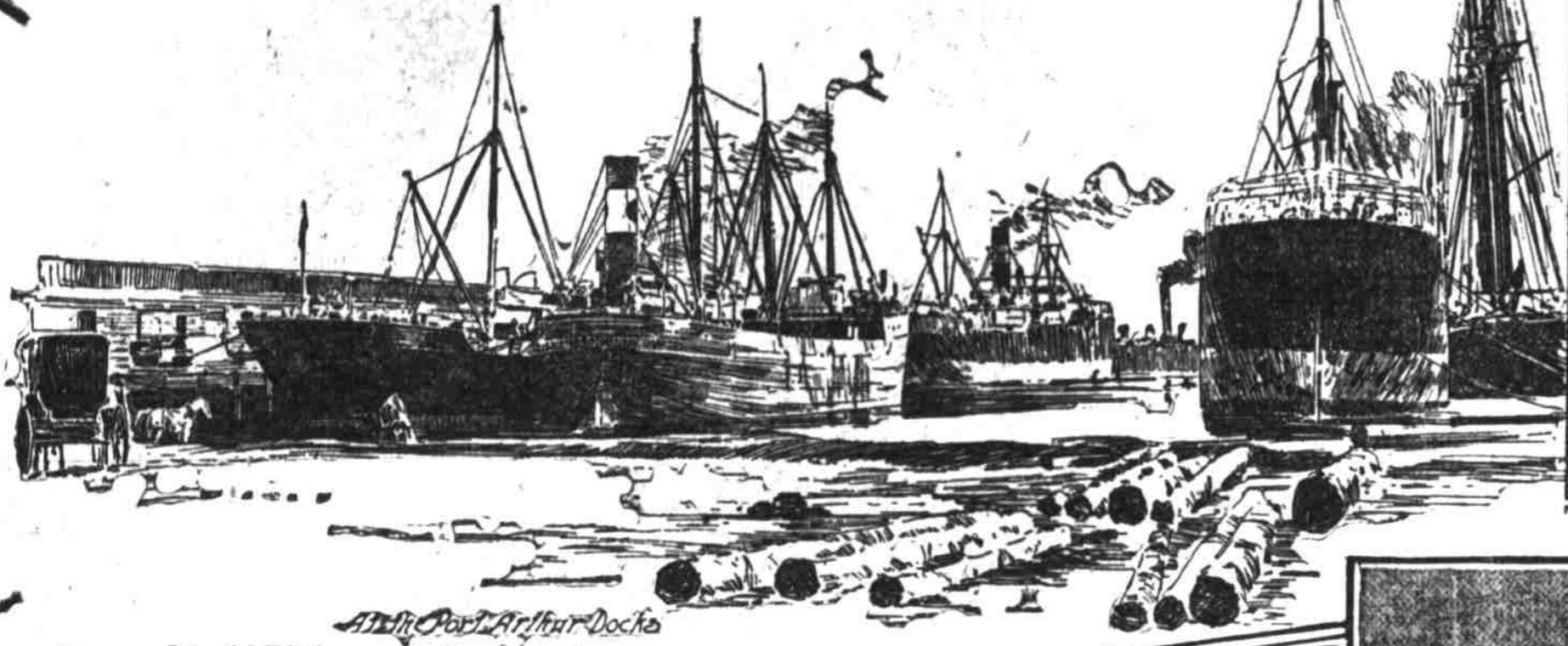
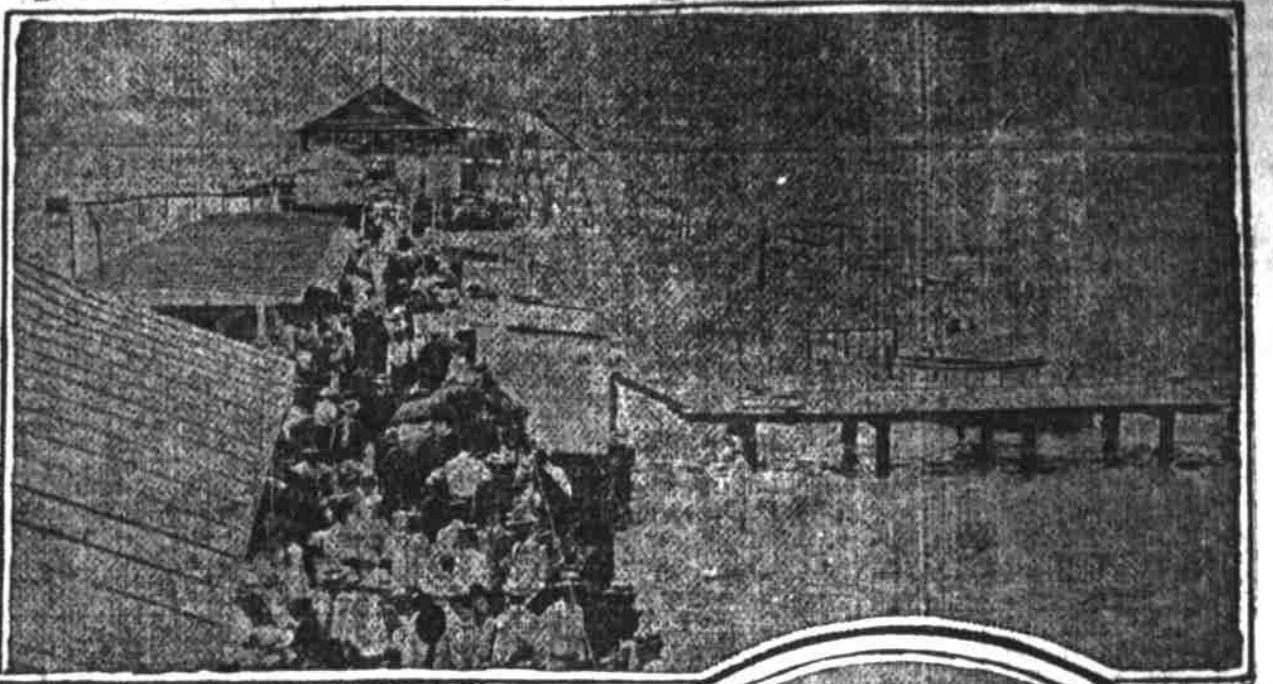


# A MILLIONAIRE'S HOBBY—THE TEXAS TOWN THAT GATES BUILT



At the Port Arthur Docks



Sunday on the Recreation Pier

## Can Do What He Likes in Port Arthur which He Virtually Owns

**JOHN W. GATES**, multi-millionaire, Wire Trust magnate and picturesque "plunger," has been credited with many ambitions. Of the great hobby of his later years, however, comparatively little has been said or written.

It is a hobby in brick and mortar and finely paved streets, with great piers and deep-water channels, with terminals for oil pipe lines, big rice mills and every indication of sturdy, hustling growth.

In short, it is a town—the flourishing young city of Port Arthur, Texas—which Mr. Gates has made important, which he practically owns, and for which he plans an ambitious future.

To this financier of remarkable achievements Port Arthur is to some extent a plaything; to plan new expansions and to watch it grow with magic strides is to him a diversion. He intends, if possible, to make it one of the most prosperous cities and best-known ports along the American seaboard.

Only a few weeks ago the statement went out broadcast that Mr. Gates, although just 52 and in prime health, had decided to withdraw from Wall street for a season and to lead the simple life "for a year or so."

No one, however, expects him to withdraw entirely from a business career. His "simple life" will probably be full enough of activity to make real advocates of a placid existence dizzy.

And if Wall street would miss him for a season, Port Arthur will doubtless feel the impetus of his genius and force, and will take longer strides toward that metropolitan greatness which is Mr. Gates' aim.

PORT ARTHUR is not quite 12 years old, but is one of the sturdiest youngsters for that age one can imagine.

Situated on the Texas gulf coast, twenty miles south of Beaumont, it has an estimated population of 8000 or 10,000. To say that Mr. Gates is proprietor of the town lacks but little of being absolutely true.

There is hardly a business or industrial enterprise in the place in which he is not interested financially, but in making these numerous investments, it is said, he was not actuated with the idea that he would reap profits from them, at least not for the present.

Possibly there is one exception to this general policy, and that is found in his oil interests. He is said to be the largest stockholder in the Texas Company, one of the greatest oil producers and refiners in the Texas oil fields. The big refinery of that company is located at Port Arthur, and, of course, it brings a tremendous net revenue to Mr. Gates and his associates.

To Mr. Gates is due the credit for locating the refinery at Port Arthur and in building up other branches of the enormous business which have added so much to the growth and importance of the town. Port Arthur is his pet hobby, and not alone because of the fact that he is clear there.

Mr. Gates' attention was attracted to the town several years ago, when he first became financially interested in the Kansas City Southern Railroad. That was about the time that Arthur E. Stillwell, of Kansas City, lost control of the road. Mr. Stillwell located the new Texas town about ten years ago and named it for himself.

It was Mr. Gates' love for hunting and other kinds of sport which that section of the country affords that led him first to become interested in the town. He had made a few trips to the section along the Neches and Sabine rivers, where bear abound, and had always met with splendid success in these hunting expeditions.

### FORESAW FUTURE FOR PORT

After he became a stockholder in the Kansas City Southern he realized that Port Arthur was most advantageously situated to be the deep-water terminus of a great railroad, and at once set about in his usual energetic way to carry out his idea for a greater town.

He has been the guiding spirit of the place ever since. So great are his investments and personal activity in promoting its growth that the place has become known far and wide as "John W. Gates' town."

So devoted is he to his hobby that he spends several weeks there each year. During these visits he plans a plain citizen of the town and is ever ready to give his aid in advancing its material welfare.

A royal entertainer, Mr. Gates usually takes a few congenial friends from the East or North along with him, and they are given a tip-top time. He is a lavish spender of money, and his coming is always welcomed by the citizens.

No one keeps in closer touch with the needs of the town than he, and when he sees that anything should be done to improve or advance existing conditions he takes the matter over with the business men, and plans

are set on foot to accomplish the desired end. There is no attempt to dominate the affairs of the town in the sense that he dictates the policy of the municipal government, but he is looked upon as the chief builder of Port Arthur, and as his views upon municipal questions are well known, the policy adopted generally conforms to his ideas.

When Mr. Gates first became interested in Port Arthur it was a place of a few hundred inhabitants. Its prospects were not encouraging. He studied the physical assets of the place, and came to the conclusion that it should become a deep-water port and that the building of a city upon model lines should be undertaken.

Good streets and sidewalks and complete systems of sewers and water works were the things which were first needed, he decided. He set about to have these public works accomplished.

His initiative resulted in the construction of a sewer system at a cost of \$75,000. A water works system was also put in. He headed a movement which resulted in the construction of more than ten miles of shelled streets and roads in and around the town.

Another notable improvement made at the suggestion of Mr. Gates was the construction of more than five miles of granite sidewalks and many miles of plank walks. It is claimed that no other town of 10,000 population in the country has better municipal improvements. The town is kept clean, and nothing is overlooked that would add to its sanitation and healthfulness.

### FREE FROM GRAFT

As well as in the establishment of her public works, Port Arthur has been fortunate in the selection of her public officials. They have all been men of business ability and honesty. Mr. Gates is not a believer in municipal ownership of public utilities. For this reason the city does not own the sewer, water works or electric light plants. Each of these public utility concerns is owned and operated by private corporations.

In each of these companies Mr. Gates is the largest stockholder and the dominating influence. It is stated that he does not operate the concerns with the view of making profits. The sewer, water works and electric light rates are lower than in any other town of corresponding size in the state, it is asserted.

Mr. Gates owns a large amount of town property, both vacant and improved. He is the principal stockholder in the big rice mill located there, as well as in a wholesale grocery company recently organized. This company has just let the contract for the construction of a new building to cost \$150,000.

It was when Port Arthur was striving to be made a port of entry that Mr. Gates showed his friendliness for the place. In fact, he was the chief promoter of the

movement that finally led to the enactment of a law by Congress making it a port of entry.

The proposition was strongly opposed by Sabine, Texas, which was seeking to be made the port of entry instead of Port Arthur. Mr. Gates spent some time in Washington, where he worked unremittingly in support of the Port Arthur proposition. As a result of his efforts the town captured the plum.

Shipments of oil through the port are enormous. Their value during 1901 was \$1,900,000. There has been a steady increase year by year since, until the value of the shipments last year exceeded \$16,000,000, and for the current year will exceed \$18,000,000, it is expected.

Mr. Gates and associates are building an oil pipe line from Tulsa, I. T., to Port Arthur. The line will be over 500 miles long and will cost more than \$6,000,000, including the construction of pumping stations and other necessary equipment.

This line will vastly increase the volume of oil poured through the place. The Guffey Petroleum Company is also building an oil pipe line from Tulsa to Port Arthur. Records show that more than 200,000 gallons of oil, refined and crude, were shipped out of Port Arthur during 1906.

In addition to the large oil refinery of Mr. Gates and his associates, there are two other refineries there. The oil fields of Sour Lake, Saratoga, Spindletop, Humble, Batson and Dayton are all connected with Port Arthur by means of pipe lines.

The docks at Port Arthur are connected with the Gulf of Mexico by a 26-foot channel. It is claimed

that the ship canal there is the deepest artificial waterway in the United States. It is a sea-level canal, without locks, 7 1/2 miles long, 183 feet wide and 23 feet deep at mean low tide.

The federal government is now excavating a channel 150 feet wide, 9 feet deep and 12 miles long along the lake shore, in front of Port Arthur, for the purpose of connecting the ship canal with the Neches and Sabine rivers, thus making the water traffic of those two great streams tributary to the new seaport.

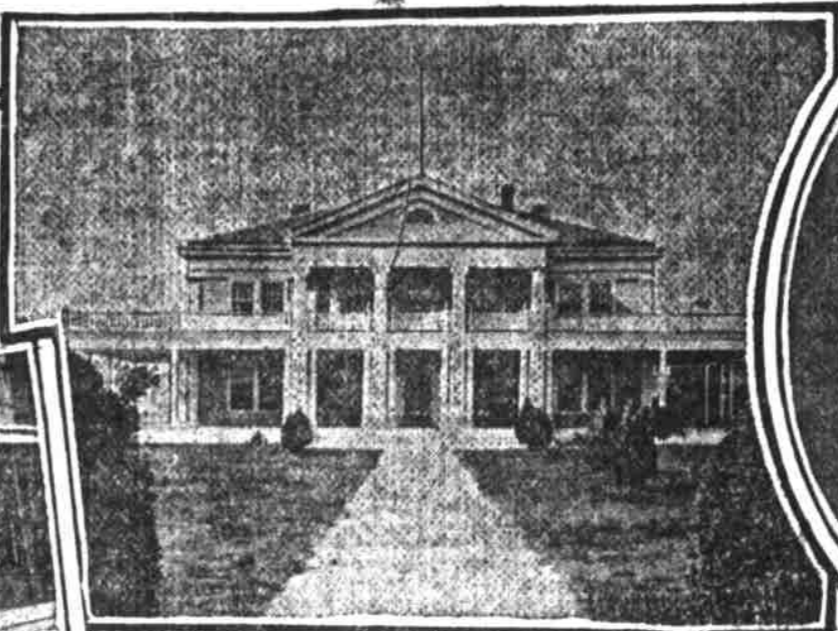
It is claimed by Mr. Gates that morally and socially Port Arthur is the peer of any city in this country. That is why he likes to visit the place so much, he says. He is a liberal contributor to the various church organizations. There are eight churches, and each has a large membership. An army of laborers is employed in the oil refinery and other business enterprises operated by Mr. Gates and his associates. He takes a personal interest in the welfare of these men. He has seen that they are provided with comfortable homes, and that they are in all respects well trained. He has done much in the matter of providing good schools for the children.

It is stated that Mr. Gates is a strong believer in organization among laborers. Port Arthur has the reputation of being the strongest labor union town of its size in the country.

It has been the custom of Mr. Gates to take life easy when on his visits to the southern town. He knows the choice bear-hunting grounds of that region, and he frequently spends days at a time during



The Gates' Beautiful Rock Arthur



The Home Mr. Gates Built in Port Arthur



Principal Business Street of the Town



John W. Gates, the "Plunging" Millionaire

the winter in the jungles along the rivers hunting big game. His home is profusely decorated with trophies of the chase.

Two or three years ago, while on one of his periodical visits, he went into the "Big Thicket" on a hunting expedition, accompanied by several New York friends. At that time he came near losing his life through an attack made upon him by a bear.

Mr. Gates came suddenly upon the bear in a narrow trail in the canebrake. He was within a few feet of the animal. Retreat was out of the question. The bear raised itself upon its hind legs and made for Mr. Gates. Without a moment's hesitation, he raised his gun and fired. The bullet went true to its aim and the animal fell dead at Mr. Gates' feet. Had his gun missed fire or his aim been bad he would doubtless have been killed.

The adventurous spirit of Mr. Gates is seen at its best while he is enjoying the freedom of a visit to his southern home. He has his own private yacht, and cruises along the coast and fishing in the waters of the gulf and bays are favorite pastimes. If the cares of Wall street ever worried him while on these outings he never showed any signs of it.

Apparently he left his big business dealings behind, and seemed to get genuine pleasure out of discussing and planning for the advancement of Port Arthur and the development of his oil interests in Texas. His abiding faith in the future of the oil industry was shown recently when he invested \$3,000,000 in the purchase of additional oil properties.

### VAST OPPORTUNITIES IN RICE

Several years ago it was stated that Mr. Gates cherished an ambition to become the rice king of America. At that time he owned 20,000 acres of rice land in Texas, and the report doubtless had its origin when he began building at Port Arthur the largest and finest rice mills in the country.

What the possibilities of American rice culture are may be told in the figures of Government Expert Talmage, who estimates that in eight of the southern states there are 70,000,000 to 90,000,000 acres of waste land suitable for rice cultivation.

Louisiana contains more land particularly suited for rice cultivation than any other state except Texas. Were all of this waste land brought under tillage the United States could rival the Orient and produce from 70,000,000,000 to 90,000,000,000 pounds of rice annually.

Here, then, is a field almost as inviting as that of the magic oil wells that spout mighty columns of dollars. If, in addition to being czar of Port Arthur, Mr. Gates becomes the American rice king, his accumulation of titles will be following hard upon the heels of his growing millions.

## WHAT THEY MIGHT HAVE BEEN



Vice President Fairbanks was a newspaper reporter. Speaker Cannon clerked in a retail store. Senator Beveridge was an expert logger. Senator LaFollette aspired to become an actor. Senator Perkins was a sailor. Senator Cass Johnson of Minnesota was sub boss of a railroad gang.

Can you conceive of "Uncle Joe" Cannon, speaker of the House of Representatives, standing behind the counter of a country store dispensing drygoods and groceries? Or Senator Albert J. Beveridge, the fiery young orator from Indiana, astride a log, coming down a mountain stream with a gang of drivers? Or Senator George O. Perkins, of California, in blue blouse and trousers and round cap, climbing the mast of a vessel, swabbing the deck or attending to any of the other duties of a sailor? Perhaps you may imagine Senator La Follette, of Wisconsin, on the stage as an actor? Yet these things you might see, if these men

had continued the vocations of their early years. What some other men of prominence in public life might have been is fully as surprising. Of all things, would Senator Beveridge, of Indiana, make one think of a lumberjack? He is essentially a man of the cities; he likes to speak before great gatherings in the crowded centers of population; to bombard the city readers of newspapers and magazines. Wouldn't he seem out of place bossing a logging crew, or himself wielding an axe or canthook? Yet, at the age of 16, he had little idea, perhaps, of ever being anything else. He started to earn wages when very young, as a farm laborer. At the age of 14, on a railroad construction job, he was driving an old-fashioned scraper. At 16 he was placed in charge of a logging camp.

Young Beveridge was a practical, expert logger. He could chip a tree so as to make it fall in any desired location; could spud the bark off; could construct or break a landing, and knew how to drive the logs down a stream. In this business he underwent perils, displaying ingenuity of no mean order. Sometimes, when an avalanche of logs, bearing logs is crashing down a mountain stream, there is an unaccountable impediment—one log becomes stuck; then others pile on top of it, and in a few minutes there is a jam, which constantly becomes more perilous. To break a log jam, one must climb over the mountain of logs, releasing one here and there, and when the avalanche starts on its way again the driver must do some remarkable skipping from log to log to escape. Many lives are lost in this way every year in the logging country. Such agility and sound judgment did Beveridge dis-

play that he never came to any harm in the logging operations.

Strongly evident during his lumberjack days were the ability for hard work, the close application to duty, the earnestness that have characterized his triumph since.

Out of his day wages he saved some money, and one day the impulse seized him to get an education. So he went to college; later studied law; became ranked among the leading lawyers in Indiana; was a stump speaker, and developed such strength that, although never before a candidate for any office, he was elected in 1859, at the age of 36, United States senator from Indiana.

Vice President Charles W. Fairbanks is an interesting example of a man who has changed his life work.

Born on an Ohio farm, he went to college at the onset of some sacrifices. His college work failed, he could not at that time have made a living as a carpenter, for he possessed great adeptness with tools, and, indeed, did odd jobs of carpentering to help earn his way through college.

But another vocation was cut out for him. He became editor of the college paper, and, owing to the training which he received in this work, was able to act as an expert newspaper reporter afterward, while pursuing the study of law.

He was an attaché of the Associated Press at Pittsburg and Cleveland, and was very fond of the work. Had he determined at any time to turn aside from the law, he could have made his mark in the newspaper business.

One of the big men who have changed their professions at least looks the part of the discarded vocation. That is Robert Marion La Follette, United States senator from Wisconsin, and formerly the governor of that state, who, in his youth, desired to shine before the footlights.

A section boss of a railroad construction gang, John A. Johnson, governor of Minnesota, might be new, only the fates ruled otherwise.

He started in life at \$10 a month as clerk in a store. In cold winter weather he wore an alpaca coat, and it was much against his college work that he could play once gave him an overcoat out of the store. At 14 he was supporting the family.

There are plenty of examples almost as interesting as these, to show how one may change his life work, and succeed. There is the fact that Joe Cannon once ran a country store.

Senator Charles Curtis, of Kansas, was a saloon keeper. Senator Perkins, of California, was a practical sailor. For years, in time he saved enough money to enter the mercantile business, and since then his rise has been rapid.

Former Senator Patterson, of Colorado, was a printer's devil, and afterward, for five years, an apprentice in a watchmaker's shop. Senator Teller, of Colorado, was a country school teacher. Senator Weldon B. Heyburn, of Iowa, was a quaking farm boy in Delaware county, Pa. And so on.