

Will Napoleon's 160-Year-Old Dream Come True?

Britain, France Huddle on Channel Link

By TOM A. CULLEN
Of Newspaper Enterprise Assn.

LONDON (NEA)—For centuries the British have taken comfort in a slice of wet geography, the English Channel, which separates them from their Continental neighbors.

This comfort traditionally lapses when Englishmen embark on the turbulent boat crossing to France. But this ferry ride may be only an unpleasant memory in a few years, because the Channel tunnel advocates are gathering steam.

Shakespeare compared England to a fortress built by nature "against infection and the hand of war," and described the Channel as a "moat against the envy of less happy lands."

Even today, Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery opposes any physical link of the island with Europe on the grounds of military security. He is not alone in history.

The realities of modern commerce and space-age defense, however, will probably prevail. It now looks as though Shakespeare's "moat"—about 20 miles wide at its narrowest point—will have a tunnel drilled beneath it or maybe a bridge to span its restless surface.

READY TO GO TO WORK

The British and French transport ministers are exploring a physical link between their countries.

The most important force behind the project is the Channel Tunnel Study Group, composed of British, French and American investors. It was formed in 1957 to explore the feasibility of a tunnel uniting the French and English shores. Technical Studies Inc. is the American firm representing the group.

After four years' study the group has concluded that twin railway tunnels could be built in five years at a cost of \$364 million. It is ready to start work pending the official green light from London and Paris.

Britain's decision to enter the Common Market gave the tunnel scheme a shot in the arm. Another factor spurring the tunnelers is the growing obsolescence of the Channel ferries. (Not a single keel has been laid in four years, perhaps because of anticipation of a tunnel.) It is estimated that Britain must spend about \$56 million soon to modernize her ferry fleet and dock facilities.

Two leading techniques have been advanced for construction. Both have been put to use before with success:

TRENCH METHOD SECOND PROPOSAL

One method depends on a huge boring machine which would carve its way through the gray chalk beneath the Channel. Called a mole, the machine could bore a tunnel at the rate of 110 feet every 24 hours. Conveyor belts and railroad cars would carry diggings away. Workmen would reinforce and finish the tunnel walls as the mole progressed ahead of them.

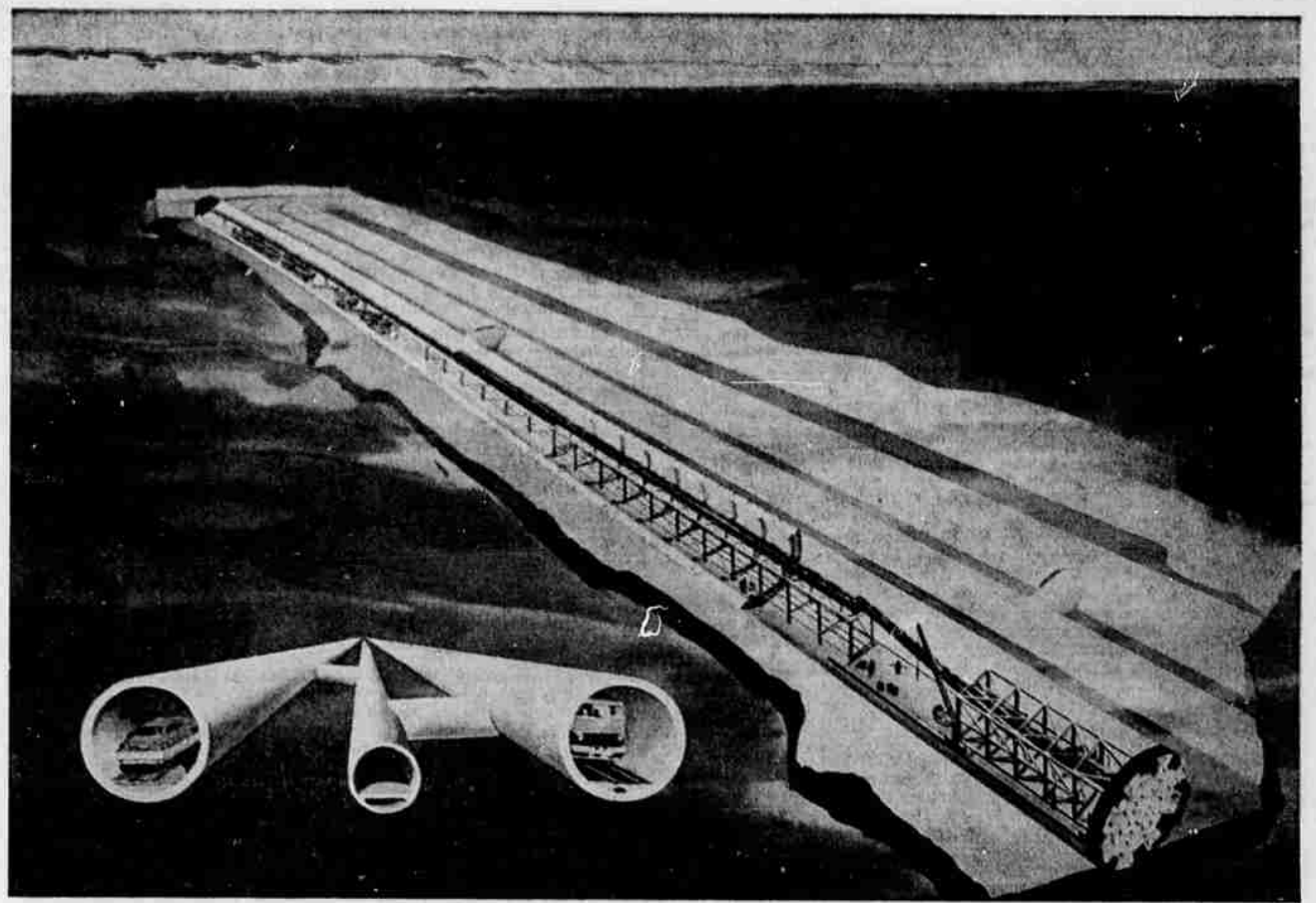
A second proposed method consists of cutting a trench in the Channel floor, laying 400-foot concrete tube sections and covering with several feet of fill. The operation could be done from a "walking barge" which would creep along its path on steel stilts, never getting its platform wet.

Divers would seal the sections together, later water would be pumped out. Then, highways could be constructed inside the tube.

Another group has proposed a 21-mile-long steel bridge from Dover, England, to Cape Gris Nez, France. Backers of this plan include former French cabinet minister Jules Moch and some banking, oil and steel interests.

Four principal objections against the bridge scheme are raised by the tunnel camp:

- Cost: A bridge would cost about \$588 million, nearly twice that of a tunnel.
- Repair: Painting and upkeep would be an enormous and costly task.
- Navigational hazard: The Channel is the busiest shipping crossroads in the world, and bridge supports could mean a seri-



Mechanical Mole

Huge Machine Would Bore Cross-Channel Tunnels Through Chalk Bottom at Rate of 110 Feet a Day

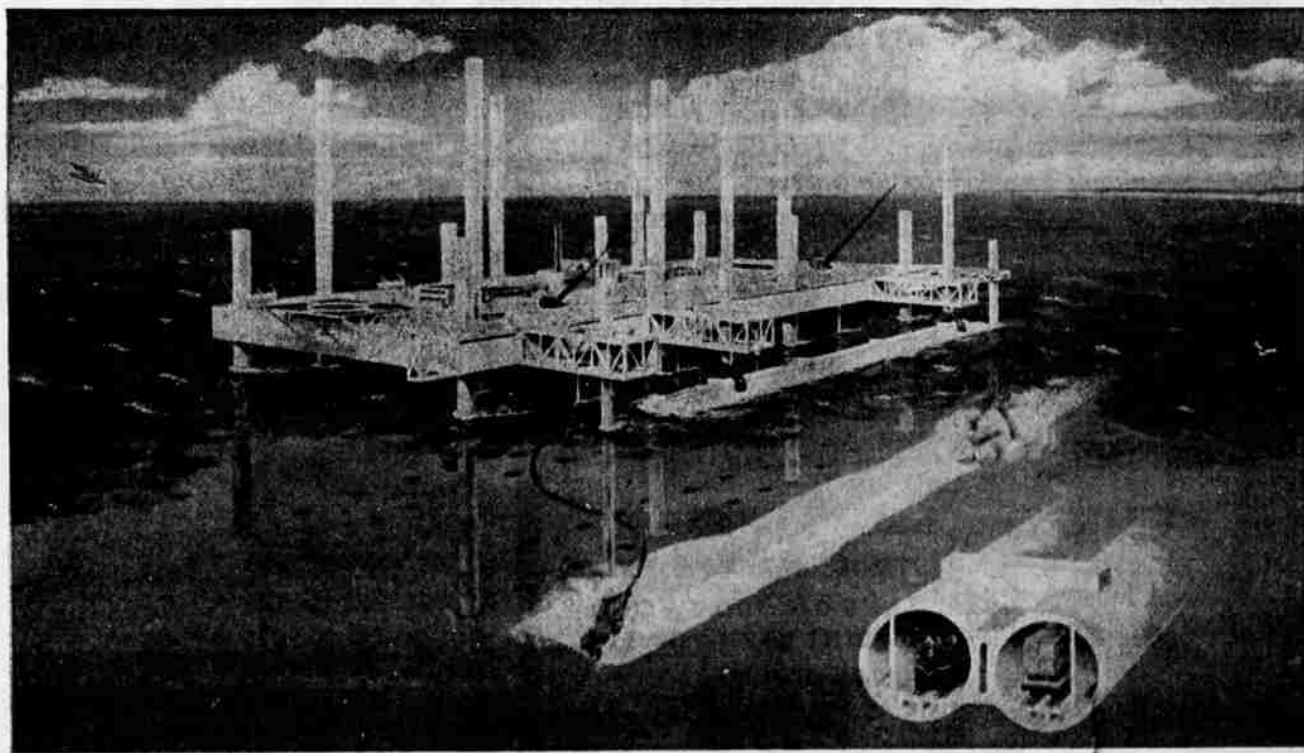
ous threat to shipping, especially in the fog which is characteristic of the Channel.

- Military target: A bridge would be an easy target for sabotage during wartime. It could be destroyed by bombs or missiles.

The railway tunnels advocated by the Channel Study Group would stretch 35 miles from Folkestone to Calais. Autos could be transported on special railway flat cars at the rate of 1,800 per hour in each direction.

The tunnel would pare 3½ hours from the present eight-hour London-Paris journey. The cost of transporting goods between England and the Continent would be cut in half, a factor likely to weigh heavily with the Common Market boosters.

A Channel tunnel was first proposed in 1802, and Napoleon had engineers draw up plans. The scheme has been resurrected every few years since then, but economic or military interests blocked its course.



Walking Barge

From It, a Trench Would Be Cut in the Floor for 400-Foot Highway Tube Sections to Be Laid and Covered

NATO Command To Make Change

LONDON (AP)—Britain next year will give up command of the nuclear armed Second Tactical Air Force in Europe of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and a German, Belgian or Dutchman will take over, Western diplomats reported Thursday night.

They said the German government is striving for the prestigious job that carries operational command of jet bombers and fighters equipped with U.S. nuclear bombs. The force includes American, British, West German, Belgian, Dutch and other allied planes.

It has been under British command since its formation.

Nazi's Daughter Weds

BOLZANO, Italy (AP)—Maria Eva Bormann, daughter of Adolf Hitler's right hand man Martin Bormann, was married Saturday to Gerhard Riedmann, a Bolzano school teacher.



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Class Invited To White House

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Kennedy has invited the graduating class of Glen Lake Community High School, at Glen Lake, Mich., to visit him at the White House, in recognition of an act of generosity.

The students gave up their scheduled trip to Washington to use the savings for isotope treatment for Duane Richardson, 17, a classmate stricken with cancer.

Private donors have offered money to make the bus tour again possible.

Tanker Sinks After Collision

LONDON (AP)—The 5,384-ton Swiss vegetable oil tanker Nyon went to the bottom after a collision off the Isle of Wight Friday, but all 33 crewmen were rescued by the other ship—the 6,199 Indian freighter Jalazad.

The accident occurred in thick fog.

The Jalazad radioed she was making for Antwerp with the rescued men.

Earl of Sandwich Dies

LONDON (AP)—The Earl of Sandwich, who once wrote his autobiography in verse, died at his ancestral home in Hinchbrook in the Midlands Friday night. He was 87.



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