

ALEPPO



The National Geographic Society

View of Aleppo and the Citadel.

(Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)

Eastern dispatches are coming to carry more and more often the name of Aleppo, little known to the ears of the present generation. But the name was once more familiar to western ears than that of almost any other city of the Near East save Constantinople itself, and it is probably destined to be great again when its portion of the world settles down.

Four thousand years ago when Abraham moved to Palestine there was an established caravan route north and south through Syria from Egypt toward Babylon. And at least from the time of Phoenician greatness there was a similar route between the coast cities on the west and Assyria and Babylonia to the east. The oasis near which these great trade routes joined became the site of one of the world's first "crossroads towns," and since then, whenever the world about it has enjoyed peace and carried on trade, it has reaped the benefits in prosperity and importance.

Its own world sufficed for many centuries to keep Aleppo a thriving city into which scores of long camel caravans came yearly. The Crusades did not greatly interfere with this prosperity, for the successes of the Crusaders stopped literally at Aleppo's walls. Antioch, on the Mediterranean, barely 70 miles away, was the first Syrian stronghold to be captured by the Christian knights and the last to be surrendered; but they were never able to subdue Aleppo, which stood for 300 years as a bar to Christian advance inland. This Mohammedan city, so close to the Crusaders' stronghold, became Saladin's capital, and it was from there that the Christians were finally driven out of the country.

After the Crusades Europe demanded an ever-increasing supply of spices and other products from the Far East, and Aleppo, near the western end of the land route over which such goods came, became more and more prosperous. Nearly all the western trading nations established representatives and warehouses in the city. The establishment of a sea route around Africa to the East injured Aleppo somewhat, and the opening of the Suez canal almost dried up its stream of east-west trade and brought up the pessimistic picture of a time when camel-trains might be a curiosity.

Now a Railway Junction.
But the railroad locomotive which westerners nickname "the steel horse" has proved Aleppo's "steel camel," and is bringing the city back to its old place of importance. The famous Bagdad railroad, which connects the mouth of the Euphrates with the Bosphorus and Europe, dips to Aleppo almost exactly at its mid-point and meets the railway which now extends from Egypt northward through Syria. The old important camel trails have thus given way to more important trails of steel, and where the one contributed the equivalent of pennies the latter may yield the equivalent of dollars. Aleppo is in a fair way to become "the Chicago of the Near East."

The Aleppo of today may be compared in some ways to Damascus, 200 miles to the south. Both, on oases, are well watered by streams that lose themselves in the desert—or more properly are made to transform themselves into delightful orchards and gardens through ancient irrigation systems. Both are made up of white, flat-topped houses punctuated by the tall, slender towers of mosques. Both have their crowded, narrow streets surging with a motley mixture of many Arabs, Jews and Armenians, and representatives of almost every other people of the Near East. Now that Syria is under French mandate, there is as well in Aleppo's crowded streets a sprinkling of the Latins who tried vainly to penetrate there during the Crusades.

Most interesting of Aleppo's sights, strikingly enough in a city built by commerce, are its huge covered bazaars, hardly to be matched elsewhere in the world. These arched rooms of subdued lights are stocked with almost every conceivable ware from crude pottery to handsome Chinese vases, from iron nails to golden chains of the finest workmanship, and from coarse cloths to the most superb product of the rug-weaver's art. In the most bazaar one may choose a steak of beef, camel or horse and have it roasted to a turn while he looks on.

The accommodating butcher will complete the meal by sending to other parts of the bazaar for fruits, sweets, coffee and wine. About the city are innumerable sweetmeat shops in which one may buy delectable concoctions of honey, fine flour and the pistachio nuts for which the surrounding orchards are famous.

Citadel Dominates the City.
A great man-made feature dominates Aleppo almost as the pyramids dominate the plain of Giza. In the middle of the flat city its early rulers constructed a huge mound 200 feet high, faced its slopes with blocks of stone, and on the summit built a strong citadel. It was this fort-capped artificial mountain which successfully withstood siege by the Crusaders in 1124. Though its fortifications have fallen into disrepair the citadel still stands out as a distinctive feature, and for the growing stream of tourists it will be the "Woolworth tower" from which the ancient city may be seen spread out within its encircling gardens.

Aleppo might have a chance to become a world capital if the Arabian dream of an "Arab empire" or a "Greater Syria" should ever come true. Its central location and strategic position in regard to lines of communication might have considerable weight over the claims of the more metropolitan but more southerly Damascus, the historic but easterly Bagdad, and the more vulnerable coast towns to the west, such as Alexandretta and Beirut. The Turks in prewar days considered Aleppo one of their safest strongholds, and those of them who foresaw a possibility of a forced retirement from Constantinople even contemplated the raising of this town on the edge of the desert into the capital of an Asiatic Turkish empire.

Situated on the rim of the desert, from which the surplus population has filtered in for many centuries, Aleppo is predominantly oriental and Mohammedan. Its typical dwelling houses are flat-roofed, and into its narrow streets, above the heads of the motley throng that traverses them, hang latticed bow windows from which secluded ladies of the family view the world. The better houses have floors and walls of stone, both covered with the beautiful rugs which Aleppo's caravans bring from the most skilled weavers of the East. The furniture is simple, including only divans, a few chairs, a table or so and many cushions.

Scene of Historical Events.
Aleppo has been the scene of many of the incidents that go to build up the crowded history of the Near East. On the fringe of the Greek empire of the Tenth century, it was often fought over. The Egyptians held the place twice during the next hundred years. It was one of the most southerly cities to feel the wrath of Timur the Lame in 1400, when with his Indian elephants bearing archers and flame-throwers he captured and sacked it. Later the Mamelukes of Egypt controlled the city, until dominated by the Ottoman Turks in 1516. For three hundred years the Ottoman domination was undisputed, but again during the past century the Egyptians reached out and gripped Aleppo, holding it against the Turks from 1833 to 1841.

Aleppo's war chapter was written in 1918, when it marked Alleby's advance through Syria at the time of the armistice. There the dashing British armored-car squadron, which had driven the Turks and Germans northward, parked their little wheeled forts, and vied with the Australian flying corps in cursing their inactivity. The ultimate point of their advance was the little, inconsequential-looking railway station at Muslimite Junction a few miles north of Aleppo. This place had the appearance of the meeting point of any two unimportant local railroads in western America, but in fact was the point of great potential importance where the rail line from Egypt met the line which, but for a few minor breaks, extended west to the Bosphorus, and eastward toward Bagdad. Later the British withdrew and, under a mandate for Syria, the French took possession and hold it today.

Happy Thought.
Bashful Sultan—Darling, or—you are the breath of my existence.
She—Have you ever tried holding your breath?

COLERAIN NEWS

Mr. J. C. Beasley went to Windsor last Tuesday.
Work was begun on the new school building last Tuesday. The first bricks being laid.
Mr. J. S. Deans of Ahoskie was in town last Tuesday.
Mr. C. C. Hughes went to Norfolk last Wednesday.
Mr. J. E. R. Perry of Powellsville was a business caller here last Wednesday.
Mr. Preston Vann of Chowan College was a visitor here last Thursday. He visited the school.
Mr. C. B. Morris, Mesdames Morris and Britton went to Edenton last Thursday.
Mr. Charles Jenkins was in town last Thursday.
Mrs. Dora Saunders and son, James spent last Friday in Suffolk.
Mr. Edgar Smith of Windsor was here last Friday in the interest of selling automobiles.
Mr. C. B. Morris made a business trip to Norfolk last Friday.
Rev. and Mrs. Lineberry spent the week end in Harrellsville where Mr. Lineberry filled his regular appointments.

Miss Edwards of the Thomasville Orphanage spent last Friday night in town as the guest of Mrs. Lineberry. Mrs. G. M. Holly and children spent the week-end at Merry Hill with Mrs. Holly's parents.
Mr. Joe Cherry of Windsor was in town last Saturday.

A number of our people went to Harrellsville Saturday evening to the concert given by the children of Oxford Orphanage.

Mr. and Mrs. N. G. Phelps and children spent last Sunday in Washington, the guest of Mrs. Tankard.
Mrs. Addie Williams spent the week-end in Harrellsville.

Mr. and Mrs. Morris went to Ahoskie last Sunday.

Mr. Pilston Godwin and family of Gatesville spent last Sunday and Monday in town with relatives.

Mr. W. J. Barnes spent last Sunday in Ahoskie.

Last Sunday, the weather pleasant, and the roads fine, there were lots of visitors at Pleasure Beach, from the neighboring towns.

Mr. and Mrs. John Britt and children spent last Sunday at Merry Hill with relatives.

Mr. Carl Sessoms spent the week end in Norfolk.

Mr. and Mrs. Harden of Windsor were visitors in town last Sunday.

Messrs. Eley and Umphlett of Ahoskie were in town last Monday.

Mr. and Mrs. Joe King Parker of Murfreesboro spent last Monday in town.

Mr. J. O. Askew, Jr., of Harrellsville was in town last Monday.

Mr. Jim Mitchell and family of Wakefield, Va., were in town last Monday.

Mr. and Mrs. D. R. Britton were visitors in Ahoskie last Monday.



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NOTICE

According to the requirements of the new public school law, the Hertford County Board of Education is hereby giving notice that the Board will on the first Monday in May, 1923, elect a county superintendent of schools to serve for a term of two years from July 1st, 1923.
4-18-23. B. G. WILLIAMS,
Chairman of Board of Education

ADMINISTRATOR'S NOTICE

Having qualified as administrator of the estate of A. C. Vann, deceased, late of Hertford County, North Carolina, this is to notify all parties holding claims against the said estate to exhibit them for payment properly verified to the undersigned on or before April 5th, 1924, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. Those indebted to the said estate, please make immediate payment.
J. N. VANN, Adm.
This 5th day of April, 1923.
4-6-23-6t.

NOTICE OF SALE UNDER DEED DEED OF TRUST

By virtue of the powers contained in a certain deed of trust executed on the 2nd day of January, 1920, by S. W. McKeel to W. L. Curtis, Trustee, which deed of trust is recorded in the Register of Deeds Office for Hertford County, in Book 68, on page 51, the conditions contained in the said deed of trust having not been complied with and on request of the holder, the undersigned trustee will therefore, on
The 10th Day of May, 1923
Offer for sale to the highest bidder for cash, in front of the U. S. Post Office in the Town of Ahoskie, N. C., Hertford County, the following tract of land, to-wit:

That certain tract of land lying and being in Hertford County, N. C., and more fully described and defined as follows: On the Southwest side of County road leading from Ahoskie, N. C. to Frazier's Cross Roads and adjoining the lands of W. L. Curtis, Mrs. A. R. Minton, V. H. Garrett and others and containing forty (40) acres more or less and being the farm known as the Minton farm purchased by S. W. McKeel from E. J. Gerock.

Time of sale—May 10, 1923.
Place of sale—In front of U. S. Post Office, Ahoskie, N. C.
Terms of sale—Cash.
This the 9th day of April, 1923.
W. L. CURTIS, Trustee.
4-18-23-4t.

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