Uncle Sam's
Panama Canal
And
World History

Its achievement an honor
to the United States
and a blessing to the world
Col. GEORGE W. GOETHALS, U. S. A.
Chairman and Chief Engineer of the Isthmian Canal Commission
UNCLE SAM'S
Panama Canal and World History
ACCOMPANYING THE PANAMA CANAL FLAT-GLOBE

ITS ACHIEVEMENT AN HONOR TO
THE UNITED STATES AND A
BLESSING TO THE WORLD

By
JOSEPH BUCKLIN BISHOP
Secretary of the Isthmian Canal Commission

and
ADMIRAL ROBERT E. PEARY, U. S. N.

ILLUSTRATED

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WE STATE WITH SATISFACTION that the Panama Canal Flat-Globe and Geographical World History give in a concise, yet exhaustive form, an up-to-date presentation of world-wide geography that has no counterpart. They also comprise a new and advanced system of geographical review and reference that has never existed before, in a form that is easy to understand and convenient to use. Further, they give a full illustration and description of the Panama Canal, and the facts about the Suez Canal by the highest authority.

THIS GLOBE and HISTORY mark a new departure in the consideration of the complete geography of the world. They cover fully the illustration, explanation and description of the earth upon which we live. Each of the two parts (Globe and History) is necessary to the intelligent and satisfactory use of the other. Together, they comprise a product needed to-day in every family circle and business place.

PANAMA CANAL BOOKS, geographies, maps, atlases, charts and the geographical part of encyclopedias are fragmentary and disconnected presentations, whereas the Panama Canal Flat-Globe and Geographical World History cover the subject of world-wide geography from all points, connectedly and completely.

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THE HISTORY OF THE AGES, and of the 2,000,000,000, people who inhabit the earth together with their activities, is shown in the national and political sub-divisions of the world, the development of its resources, ocean and land transportation facilities and means of intercommunication, and the industrial, commercial and agricultural activities of the various races. All these subjects are clearly presented in this production.

THE FLAT-GLOBE and WORLD HISTORY are edited by Admiral Robert E. Peary, U. S. N., Discoverer of the North Pole, President Eighth International Geographic Congress, Three Years President American Geographical Society, New York, Member of the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C., Fellow of the Royal Geographic Society, London, England; Joseph Bucklin Bishop, Eight Years Secretary of the
Panama Canal; Cyrus C. Adams, Geographical Author and Editor of the American Geographical Society. These names are sufficient guarantee of the correctness and perfection of the Globe and History. All the geographical facts contained in both the Globe and History are the very latest and statistics are taken from the last census.

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The Panama Canal Flat-Globe and World History are designed to fill a long-felt want, a real need in every family circle and business place, and they do it completely and perfectly. The Globe gives an objective illustration of the entire earth's surface. The history explains physical, mathematical and national or political geography and human activities over the world. Read the history with the Globe before you and you will have a knowledge of the world that is of great value, both scholarly and commercial.

The Flat-Globe should be hung against the wall in the home or office, the equatorial line on a level with the eye. It is a beautiful ornament that delights the eye and instructs the mind. It can be rolled into very small space and put away in a drawer, closet, or upon a shelf when not in use.

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It is not heavy, cumbersome, inconvenient to use, nor does it occupy a large space in the office or home. It can be used upon a table or desk, upon the lap, or at night under a light.

In traveling it can be carried in a valise or trunk always ready for use, occupying almost no space.
JOSEPH BUCKLIN BISHOP
SECRETARY OF THE Isthmian CANAL COMMISSION
The official seal of the Isthmian Canal Commission bears the motto: "The Land Divided. The World United." That is a terse and accurate statement of what the Panama Canal accomplishes. It divides a hemisphere and by opening a new and shorter ocean highway brings the nations of the earth into closer intercourse with one another.

In supplying this highway the United States has conferred a benefit upon mankind which has few equals in human history, the full measure of which time alone can reveal.

Great wars change the map of the world by their victories, but few have made more radical and far reaching changes than will follow this momentous victory of peace—a victory for human welfare and progress.

The Vision of Columbus.—The Canal realizes the dream of Columbus in supplying by the hand of man that "hidden strait" which he sought so eagerly in the firm belief that it had been created by the Almighty as the pathway of the seas to the Indies. If he were living to-day and could visit the Atlantic entrance to the Canal he would find it placed in an inlet of the same shore which he scanned so closely nearly four centuries ago as he sailed along it in his search for the "hidden strait."

Balboa and Magellan.—His belief remained unshaken for many years after his death, and the search was continued by navigators from various nations of the old world who had been inspired by his discoveries to follow in his wake.

Even after Balboa had climbed the mountains of the Cordilleras and caught his first glimpse of the Pacific Ocean, it still maintained its hold. The realization of the fact that Columbus'
had discovered a new world rather than an unknown part of Asia was of very slow growth. It began to get a lasting foundation only when Magellan sailed around the southern extremity of South America and entered the Pacific Ocean through the strait which bears his name. Magellan called the new ocean Pacific because of its calm aspect while he was in it. Balboa had called it the “South Sea,” but Magellan’s name became the permanent appellation.

**Point of Balboa’s Discovery.**—There is much erroneous information in print about the exact place of Balboa’s first sight of the Pacific. On the line of the Panama Canal, nearly midway there is a mountain about 1,000 feet high which is called “Balboa Hill,” because from a lookout in a tree on its summit both oceans can be seen on a clear day. This name has misled many visitors to the Isthmus into the belief that it was on this elevation that Balboa made his discovery.

**San Miguel Bay.**—Balboa was never on this part of the Isthmus. He started on his journey of discovery on the northeastern shore of the Gulf of Darien, and he first saw the Pacific from a mountain top at the head of a deep bay on Sept. 25, 1513, old style, Oct. 5, new style. He named this bay San Miguel, because the day of his discovery was St. Michael’s day in the calendar of the Catholic Church. That name it still bears, and fixes indisputably the place of discovery.

The name of the mountain peak is not known; in fact, it undoubtedly had no name at the time for the country was inhabited only by tribes of very wild Indians, and was virtually impassable. Various mountain peaks have been cited as the one on which Balboa stood, but they are mere guesses. The location is about 125 miles east of the Canal line.

**Murder of Balboa.**—Balboa was put to death in January, 1519 by one Pedro Arias de Avila, known in history most often
The Cathedral of Panama City
as Pedrarias, one of the most unscrupulous and cruel of the many adventurers who were sent out by Spain to rule its new possessions in America. He was jealous of Balboa’s great fame as a discoverer and of his popularity in the province in which both lived. He had Balboa arrested and tried on trumped-up charges and beheaded together with four of his companions, two of whom had stood with him on the mountain when he first saw the Pacific ocean.

The name of the place at which the execution took place was Acla, meaning bones, so called because it was the frequent battle ground of two rival Indian tribes whose chiefs were two brothers. It was a small settlement of huts, situated on the northeastern shore of the Gulf of Darien, and it was from it that Balboa set out to cross the mountains on his journey of discovery.

Old Panama.—Avila’s murder of Balboa, and his many other atrocities, compelled him to flee from the province on the coast of the Gulf of Darien of which he was the ruler by order of the King of Spain. A few months after Balboa’s death, he started with about 400 followers, crossed the mountains over the same route in which Balboa had travelled, passed down the Gulf of San Miguel to the Pacific, and there embarked in some ships Balboa had constructed for voyages of discovery, and sailed along the coast to the eastward.

He passed the Pearl Islands in the present Bay of Panama, which Balboa had discovered and named, passed also other groups of islands, three of which are now the sites of the fortifications of the Canal at its Pacific entrance, and reached a small Indian village about four miles east of the present city of Panama.

Panama Means “Plenty of Fish.”—The village stood at the head of a deep and shallow bay, which was quite dry at low tide. It was a mere settlement of huts, the inhabitants being fishermen who called the place Panama because of the abundance
of fish in the waters, the word signifying in the primitive language of the native Cueva Indians "plenty fish."

Founding the City. — Avila decided to found a city there, and it was established formally with the name of Panama on August 15, 1521. Gradually the inhabitants of the settlement on the Gulf of Darien, the chief of which was Santa Maria de la Antigua, with their flocks and other possessions, moved to the new place.

It grew rapidly, and was made a city by royal decree of Charles V, on September 15, 1521. Its position as the chief port of the Pacific and terminus of the first transit route or trail across the Isthmus was the chief cause of this. It was the gateway for all commerce between Spain and its American possessions, including the great output of gold and silver from the rich mines of Peru. Pizarro fitted out there his three expeditions to Peru, the last of which resulted in its conquest in 1531.

It was twice swept by fire, first in 1563, and again in 1644, being nearly destroyed on both occasions. It rallied from the latter disaster only to be sacked in 1671 by Morgan, the notorious buccaneer, and burned to the ground.

The City's Size and Wealth Exaggerated. — History for nearly two centuries has abounded in exaggerated statements concerning the size and wealth of the city. These are founded on the celebrated narrative of John Esquemelíng, one of Morgan's band of pirates who sacked the city.

Esquemelíng's book, which was first published in Holland in 1678, and has had repeated publications in English since that time, retains its position to this day as one of the most vivid and interesting books in piratical literature, but as history it is absurdly inaccurate. In it he represented the city as containing "two thousand houses of magnificent and prodigious building, being all or in the greatest part inhabited by merchants of that country who are vastly rich," for "inhabitants of lesser quality
and tradesmen five thousand houses more," and eight monasteries and two stately churches, "all richly adorned with altar pieces and paintings."

**Real Size of the City.**—On this foundation, imaginative writers have constructed a city of 50,000 inhabitants, vast wealth and magnificent buildings. The facts of the case, revealed by careful study of the dimensions of the site, the character of the ruins, and the official documents relating to it in the archives preserved by the government in Spain, show that its area never exceeded 150 acres, that outside of its churches and monasteries and a few public buildings, it contained no structures that could be called magnificent or anything approaching that term, and that its population never exceeded 10,000, the greater part of whom were negroes and slaves. Its buildings, aside from those mentioned above which were of stone, were similar to those in Central American towns of to-day, simple in character, and mainly of wood, while those of the negro population were rude huts or shacks. It was a mere gateway for the wealth which passed through it to Spain.

**The New City of Panama.**—So complete was the destruction of the old city that no effort was made to rebuild it. Its surviving inhabitants sought for a new city a site which could be fortified on all sides, that is, a site for a walled town. This they found about four miles west of the old site, at the head of the Bay of Panama.

There in January 1673, they established by royal decree and with formal religious ceremonies the present city of Panama. They surrounded it with a huge wall, varying from 20 to 30 feet in height, in some places 60 feet in thickness, and about four miles in length. There were strong forts on the land and sea sides, with the heaviest fortifications known at the time, and on the land side a deep moat with drawbridge and massive gates.
The wall was many years in building, and cost large sums of money. Into its construction went much stone brought from the ruins of the monasteries and churches of the old city. It was designed to repel assault by land and sea and was entirely successful. Sections of the old wall exist to-day, but the greater part of it has disappeared as the city has increased in area.

**The Famous Flat Arch.**—Its cathedral was nearly 88 years in building, and is in good condition to-day. Some of its earlier churches are now in ruins. In one of these, which was nearly destroyed by fire in 1756, was the famous “flat arch,” recently removed, which was an object of great interest to visitors because of its unusual construction. It was shown to visitors and cited as evidence of the lack of severe earthquakes on that part of the Isthmus for the past two centuries.

**Mule Trail Transit.**—In 1519, the first line of posts with a connecting trail was opened across the Isthmus from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It ran from old Panama city on the Pacific to Nombre de Dios on the Caribbean, a distance of about 90 miles, crossing the Chagres at a place called Venta Cruz, afterward Cruces. For 16 years this was the sole transit route. Later the Chagres River was made navigable for small boats from its mouth in the Caribbean to Venta Cruz, a distance of about 36 miles, and thus opened a water route from Venta Cruz to Nombre de Dios, which was situated about 35 miles east of the present city of Colon.

In 1597, Porto Bello, 15 miles east of Colon, was substituted for Nombre de Dios. This town was situated in a bay which had been visited and given that name by Columbus in 1502. It was taken and sacked by Morgan in 1668.

The American canal builders, in search of suitable sand and clay for the construction of the Gatun locks found the former at Nombre de Dios and the latter at Porto Bello.
Some Panamanian Belles in National Costume
Three Centuries of Mule Transit.—Transit by rudely paved trails and small craft over the lower portion of the Chagres River continued to be the sole method of crossing the Isthmus for nearly two and three-quarter centuries.

An irresistible demand for better facilities arose in 1848 when the discovery of gold in California sent thousands of eager fortune seekers across the Isthmus for that state. Unwilling to submit to the delay of the long journey around Cape Horn, they took the short cut of the Isthmus, carried to it by packet and steamship lines which were opened between New York and the termini of the Isthmus trails on the Caribbean.

The hardships which they endured aroused public attention in the United States to both the necessity and the commercial value of a more satisfactory method of transit.

The Panama Railroad.—In December 1848, three energetic and far-sighted citizens of New York, William Henry Aspinwall, John Lloyd Stephens and Henry Chauncey, under the name of the Panama Railroad Company, obtained from New Granada of which Panama was then a part, a grant for the construction of a railway across the Isthmus. In the following year the New York Legislature passed an act incorporating the company. Construction of the road began in 1850 and it was completed in 1855. The chief engineers in charge of the work were Col. George M. Totten and John C. Trautwine. The first continued till the end, but the second retired at the end of the first year.

Real Pioneers of the Canal.—There is not in the annals of railway construction anywhere record of greater persistence and more indomitable courage than the builders of this railway showed.

They were the pioneers of the canal, and the hardships which they endured were far beyond any that the canal builders had to face. The road which they built pointed the way for the
canal of the future and became the chief agency in its construction.

They did honor to the American name and deserve to be held in lasting remembrance, yet so quickly are great deeds forgotten that to-day their names are virtually unknown and among thousands of Americans there exists a belief that the Panama Railroad was constructed by the French during their effort to build a canal, though it was finished more than a quarter of a century before they arrived on the Isthmus.

Cost in Money and Life.—The cost of the railway in money was about $8,000,000. The cost in life has been grossly exaggerated.

A deathless "fake," which has been published seriously many times, says it "cost a life for every tie." That has a taking sound and is easily remembered and though often denied has a fair chance of immortality.

Its absurdity is shown by the fact that there were about 150,000 ties in the railway, whereas the total force employed in its construction did not exceed 6,000. Col. Totten placed the death roll at 835, including 295 white laborers; 140 black; and 400 Chinese.

The Clayton-Bulwer Blockade.—At the same time that the three American pioneers were beginning the construction of the Panama Railroad, there was in contemplation the building of a canal. In 1850 the United States and Great Britain formed what is known as the Clayton-Bulwer treaty in which they agreed to favor the construction of an Isthmus Canal under their joint protection. The object of this was to hasten the building of a canal, but the joint protection provision was so unpopular in the United States that it made impossible any such construction for 50 years.

The French Failure.—In the meantime, Count Ferdinand
de Lesseps, the builder of the Suez Canal, conceived the idea of repeating his success at Panama. He formed a company for that purpose in 1879 and began work in the following year. He proposed to build a canal at sea level and to accomplish the task in 12 years, at an estimated cost of about $132,000,000. Eight years were spent in the effort, and about $260,000,000 were expended. During that time about one-third of the proposed canal had been excavated. A change was made to a lock canal during the final year, but only a small amount of work was done upon it.

**Collapse of the Company.**—The failure of the French Company in 1889 was complete. It had received from all sources $266,000,000, and every cent of it had been spent. It was placed in the hands of a receiver and an official examination of its affairs which followed revealed a vast amount of extravagance and bad management.

Count de Lesseps and his son Charles were sentenced to a fine and to a term of imprisonment, and similar sentences were passed upon several of their associates. The sentence against the Count was never executed for he was 88 years old at the time, and in very feeble health. He died about a year later. That against his son was annulled by the Court of Appeals.

**Work of the French.**—It is the undivided opinion of the engineers of the American canal that the French engineers are entitled to high praise for their excellent work, and for the courage and devotion shown in prosecuting it. They had to encounter obstacles which their successors were not called upon to meet. The mosquito theory of disease transmission—which will be considered later on in this narrative—was unknown to them. They did not know that both malaria and yellow fever were transmitted in that way and in that way alone, and could not adopt effective measures of prevention.
The consequence was that their death roll, from yellow fever especially, was very heavy, and dread of that mysterious disease was constant and demoralizing. During the eight years of work about 2,000 Frenchmen died of yellow fever, and the total death roll from all causes among all employes is estimated by the best authorities at about 16,500.

It was a situation to try men’s souls, and it is an honor to the French nation that its sons proved nobly equal to the test.

Enter the Americans.—Following the French failure, events which were to clear the way for the American canal occurred with gratifying rapidity. A new treaty with England, known as the Hay-Paumcefote treaty, was adopted which gave the United States the right to construct what the American people desired—an American canal, built by Americans and controlled by Americans.

A Commission appointed by President McKinley in 1890 had made a report in favor of constructing an Isthmian canal at Nicaragua in preference to Panama because the new French Canal Company which had been organized on the ruins of the old asked $109,000,000 for its rights, property and franchise on the Isthmus, which the Commission had valued at $40,000,000.

Before action could be taken by Congress, the French Company consented to sell for $40,000,000, and the Commission reversed its finding and recommended a canal at Panama.

In June, 1902 a bill was passed by both houses of Congress and signed by President Roosevelt adopting Panama as the route.

A Good Bargain.—That the United States made a good bargain in this purchase has been established beyond dispute. A careful appraisal was made and officially adopted by the Canal Commission which has built the canal, soon after the work was well under way, of the value of the work done and property of
all kinds received from the French in return for the payment, and the total was fixed at $42,799,826. Of this amount about $25,000,000 was for that part of the French excavation—39,000,000 cubic yards out of a total of 78,000,000—which had proved useful to the American Canal.

Colombia Loses Panama.—Before work could begin at Panama a treaty had to be made by the United States with Colombia. One was negotiated, was signed by representatives of both countries, was ratified by the Senate of the United States, but was rejected unanimously by the Congress of Colombia, on the ground that the price stipulated to be paid to Colombia, $10,000,000 in gold and, in addition, beginning nine years after the date of ratification, an annual payment of $250,000, was insufficient.

The authorized representative of the Colombian government had informed the American government through its minister at Bogota that the treaty could not be ratified without two amendments, one stipulating that the French Canal Company should pay to Colombia $10,000,000 for the right of transfer of its Isthmus property to the United States and the other increasing the payment of the United States to Colombia from $10,000,000 to $15,000,000. Secretary Hay, for the United States government, refused to entertain these proposals.

Panama Revolts.—The representatives of the department or province of Panama in the Colombian Congress gave public notice while the treaty was under consideration that Panama would revolt if it were rejected. It was rejected on August, 12, 1903, and on November 3 a revolution took place in Panama and an independent Republic was established. The United States government promptly recognized the new republic, negotiated a treaty with it for the construction of a canal, and in May 1904, formally took over its acquired property and began work.