

# NOT GOOD IN SUDAN

But the Captain Made It Good After We Shaved

By FRANCIS FLOOD

A map of Africa—if it's a big map—will show a dot called Abehir. It's almost in the exact centre of the Dark Continent, on the southern edge of the Sahara Desert. This forlorn little spot in the black heart of Africa is not an inviting looking locus to the average person who has never been there—and still less to one who has.

But to us Abehir seemed the end of the rainbow trail. At least it was the peak of the arch, with only the downhill slide to the pot of gold at the end. There would be a little store at Abehir, our first opportunity in 2,000 miles or six weeks' time to buy anything at all except long-legged chickens and long-lived eggs.

An automobile expedition had once made the trip from Abehir to the Red Sea. Thus if we had no trail we at least had a precedent to follow. It is true, the head of that expedition, an Englishman and a member of Parliament, wrote a book about his trip, and it was not a good road ad by any means. He, too, had crossed Africa, but by a more southerly and much easier route than we. And the darkest pages of his book were about that part of his trip between Abehir and El Obeid, where we had yet to go. But Jim and I had proved, to ourselves at least, that we could travel on our motorcycles absolutely any place an automobile could go. The worst auto reports we could get would be good news for us.

The gasoline problem threatened us again. We towed one bike behind the other whenever it was at all possible and finally reached a little grass village called Hemmina, only fifteen miles from Abehir. It was almost dark. We had just enough gasoline to run one motorcycle the fifteen miles into town. Jim took that and started out, promising to send some gasoline back on a native's head for me or to bring it himself on a horse.

I tried to get a dozen villagers to tow my machine on into Abehir, or at least until we met the gasoline coming back and argued in the sign language until I was almost as black in the face as they. I even offered them money, but they were afraid of the lions in that lonely land at night. In English and French I might have convinced them that I wasn't afraid myself, but it's hard to lie in signs. They towed me to a little round mud hut a half-mile from the village and suggested that I stop there for the night. I sent the curious crowd away with instructions to bring me water, a chicken, and some eggs. A few minutes later two dusky knaves, a half-dozen boys and a young woman returned. The two men were in the uniform of a French soldier; that is one wore the trousers and the other the coat. They knew a few words of French and explained that the chief had sent them to guard me during the night and the boys to bring the water and chickens and eggs. The young black female was a special gift from the chief that I might be assured of his hospitality and feel entirely welcome and at home as long as I remained in his village.

I sent the whole troupe back with my compliments and gave my guards a few francs to pay the chief for his provisions. An hour later the zealous black guards returned with half a calabash of strong smelling liquor they had purchased with my money. They were bound to guard me and were already drunk enough to insist on obeying their chief's commands. I rolled the motorcycle into the open doorway of my mud house and spread my blanket on the sandy floor inside. I had no gun, but I parked the hatchet near at hand and tried to justify this precaution by arguing that the lions I heard out in the bush might try to come inside.

"Zip. Bing." A ki-ki and a roar, and the sound of bare feet running through the sand awoke me in the dead of night. I seized my hatchet and peeked around the motorcycle wheels. A black man, spear in hand, was crouched behind the compound wall. Another spear zipped past my door and I pulled in my neck. Then I remembered that in the land of blacks the white man's constant show of superiority and fearlessness is the only guarantee of safety and respect, and here I was cowering in the shadow of my mud doorway. I strode out into the dim moonlight and sternly called my guards to time for making such a noise.

They were all excited. A lion, they said, had chased a jackal inside the compound walls and they had thrown their spears to drive the lion and his frightened prey away. Imagination runs high in the Afric mind, especially when lubricated with a combustion of fear and bad liquor and a desire to show off their bravery before a well-framed white man. They insisted it was "le lion" and I piped them down and told them it was only a "chien." But lion or dog, it was enough to keep me awake for—well, nearly thirty minutes, I suppose.

About three o'clock Jim came back, bareheaded, on a horse. A black carrier was supposed to be somewhere behind with five gallons of gasoline on his head. The moment he arrived we poured the gasoline into our tank, gave him the horse to ride back, and started off. Since Jim had come away from Abehir without his cork helmet we had to be back before the sun got too high above the horizon.

Abehir we found a Greek merchant and a Ford! "Every time you

turn up a stone in the Sudan you'll find a Greek merchant," promised the French Commandant at Abehir. "But don't think this car means you'll have good roads the rest of the way. From El Fasher to El Obeid you'll need to be towed. That's about 500 miles." This pessimistic prophecy was seconded by his two lieutenants, who had never been over the road himself, but who knew all about it.

After two or three days arguing with these irreconcilables, who would believe everything but about. Prohibition and nothing good. Jim and I started out again. We made over 100 miles the first day to Andre, the last French fort. Geneina, the first British outpost in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, was only about 20 miles away—and that reminded us of our passports. Our all-inclusive British visa for which we'd paid \$10 each, and all British colonies, territories, mandates and protectorates, including Iraq and Palestine. Not good for the Sudan. It was as big a coverage as a patent medicine cure-all from cancer to housemaid's knee, but just like those same medicines, it wasn't good for what ailed us. If the passport had said nothing about the Sudan we'd have taken a chance, but since it went out of its way to provide specifically the Sudan—we could only take a chance anyway.

"They'll probably send you back to Lagos and the West Coast where you started from," said the Captain at Adre on the French side of the border. "You can fight the desert and jungle and drouth and hear all over again."

"Never again," vowed Jim. "Or you can stay where you are, here in our Sahara," continued the Captain, looking out over a valley of desolation he called a lake.

"Not that," I said. "Then you'll just have to slip on over the line to Geneina and ask Captain Evans to fix you up a passport visa. He can get it all right if he wants to."

The next day we reached the border and British territory again, the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. There was only a sandy caravan trail and not an officer or even a traveler in sight, but Jim immediately crossed over to the left side of the road. "Remember the English traffic rules," he warned me. "The right side of the road is the left again now." We didn't break any speed laws in that deep, soft sand.

We chugged right up to the house of the resident as soon as we reached Geneina, and I think our little English motors hummed a jolly "Fee Fi Fo Fum" all the way to that Englishman. It was a real house, too, with even an attempt at a hedge and a lawn that only a Briton would brave in that desert of desolation and drouth. We knocked on the first door we'd seen in any house for weeks, and a black houseboy, in a clean white gown, a neat, green turban on his head and a sash of the same material corseted about his midriff bowed us plump into civilization again.

There were rugs on the floor, real pictures on a decorated wall and some magazines, in English, beside a big unholstered chair. There was a bookcase to astound us, and this lone Englishman standing guard on the ragged fringe of Empire had even hung some tidy bits of drape about the first glass windows we had seen in a thousand miles of travel. Then, to complete this transplanting of Merry England itself there in the heart of the Dark Continent the black "boy" brought us a pot of tea and a little plate of cakes and announced that the Captain was just now coming from the tennis court. An Englishman is always English and he'll hang onto his home standard of comfort and cleanliness, his sports, and his dress clothes as long as he'll hang onto his bath, his beer and his congenial aristocracy—and that means as long as he lives. You can lead an Englishman into the bush but you can't make him a bushman. No one could have been better to us than the French during the weeks we were in French Equatorial Africa, but the French—well, they don't dress for dinner in the bush.

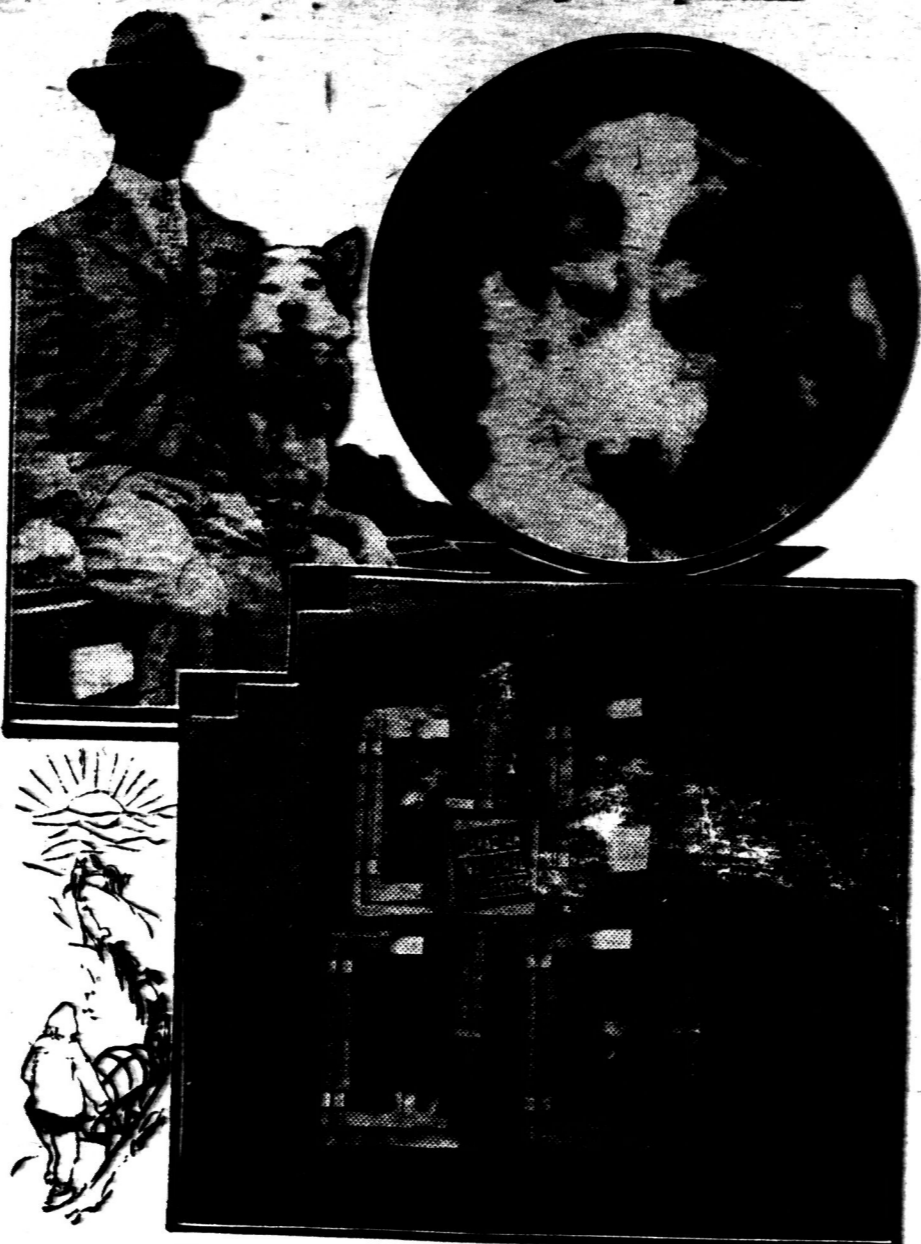
We showed the Captain our passports and trembled. The English are sticklers for law and regulations and we knew it. They will hardly consider a man born if there is the slightest irregularity in his birth certificate—and our passports were absolutely no good at all. Besides, we were "fool Americans," dirty and whiskered and ragged, and we had no dress suit for dinner. Clearly we didn't belong in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan the way we looked.

"Sorry, old beans," he finally announced, "but I can't recognize you from these photos in your passports. You're smooth shaven in the pictures. You'll have to cut off that brush. We don't live in the bush here. Boy, bring two pitchers of hot water!"

"He's got us, Uop," mourned Jim. "Shades of Bill Thompson. We've got to shave."

"He thinks you're a Red," I told Jim, for my partner's six weeks' of untrimmed beard was a flaming Bolshevik red. I had plenty of beard myself, and a long, flowing black moustache that looked like the spirit of '36. It was the eighth of February, and we hadn't shaved since Christmas eve. The Captain was right. We shaved. He visced our pas-

## Canadian Huskies for Byrd Expedition



When Commander Richard Evelyn Byrd desired dogs for the use of the South Polar Expedition he, naturally, thought of Canada and it was to the North Shore of the St. Lawrence in Quebec and Labrador he sent his agents to select and purchase huskies. David E. Buckingham, V.M.D., consulting veterinarian to the Byrd Antarctic Expedition, went along the North Shore Bay and Blanc Sablon. The latter place, just inside the Quebec boundary, had a previous flash of fame as the community from which part of the news of the landing of the trans-Atlantic plane, Bremen on Greenly Island, was flashed to the world at large.

The dogs were conveyed to Quebec by the S.S. North Shore, of the Clarke Steamship Company, and at Quebec transferred to the care of the Canadian National Express. Two special cars were in readiness and the dogs, each in a private stout crate, were carefully placed on board and despatched to Montreal by the day express. At Montreal, the cars were switched to "The Washingtonian" and on this crack train of the National System the Huskies were sent to Washington en route to the United States Naval Supply Base at Hampton Roads, Virginia. From that point the Canadian dogs will sail for New Zealand, Ross Sea and Bay of Whales. There were 79 dogs in the shipment handled by the Canadian National Railways.

ports and we slept that night between clean white sheets. We were ready for the Sudan.

## Chinese Girls Combat Ban on Binding of Feet

Priests, Supporting Opposition, Driven From Temples

Chengchow, China.—Footbinding here is being stopped by force. Shopkeepers who were "urged" to paint their doors and gates a "Nationalist blue" do not resent the new reforms nearly so much as the young women and girls who have had their tightly wound foot cloths forcibly removed by the authorities in the street.

In the country districts of Honan province much trouble has been caused from time to time by an organization called the Miao lao Kwei, which has been urging the women to cling to their old-time custom of binding their feet despite all the orders to the contrary by government officials.

This movement was launched by the priests, who have been driven from their temples.

The fellow who believes in predestination jumps as far as the sound of a honk.—Schenectady Gazette.



"With all the talk people do about death I don't believe we know the first thing about it."

"Oh, sure we do! We know it's always fatal."

"My wife and I agree perfectly about some things." "Indeed!" "Yes. When anything goes wrong I take it for granted that it is my fault. And Henrietta always thinks so, too."

"Babe" Ruth has forty-four home runs to his credit this year. But he made his greatest hit of the season recently when he gave ice-cream cones to hundreds of youngsters.

## The Golfomaniac

One of the People We Know Because We Can't Help It

We ride in and out pretty often together, he and I, on a suburban train. That's how I came to talk to him. "Fine morning," I said as I sat down beside him yesterday and opened a newspaper.

"Great!" he answered, "the grass is drying out fast now after all this rain and the greens will soon be all right to play."

"Yes," I said. "For the matter of that," said my friend, "a man could begin to play at six in the morning easily. In fact, I've often wondered that there's so little golf played before breakfast. We happened to be talking about golf, a few of us that night—I don't know how it came up—and we were saying that it seems a pity that some of the best part of the day, say, from five o'clock to seven-thirty, is never used."

"That's true," I answered, and, then, to shift the subject, I said, looking out of the window:

"It's a pretty bit of country just here, isn't it?"

"It is," he replied, "but it seems a shame they make no use of it—just a few market gardens and things like that. Why, I noticed along here acres and acres of just glass—some kind of houses for plants or something—and whole fields full of lettuce and things like that. It's a pity they don't make something of it. I was remarking only the other day as I came along in the train with a friend of mine, that you could easily lay out an 18-hole course anywhere here."

"Could you?" I said. "Oh, yes. This ground, you know, is an excellent light soil to shovel up into bunkers. You could drive some big ditches through it and make one or two deep holes—the kind they have on some of the French links. In fact, improve it to any extent."

I glanced at my morning paper. "I see," I said, "that it is again rumored that Lloyd George is at last definitely to retire."

"Funny thing about Lloyd George," answered my friend. "He never played, you know; most extraordinary thing—don't you think?—for a man in his position. Balfour, of course, was very different; I remember when I was over in Scotland last summer I had the honor of going around the course at Dumfries just after Lord Balfour. Pretty interesting experience, don't you think?"

"Were you over on business?" I asked.

"No, not exactly. I went to get a golf ball, a particular golf ball. Of course, I didn't go merely for that. I wanted to get a mashie as well. The only way, you know, to get just what you want is to go to Scotland for it."

"Did you see much of Scotland?" "I saw it all. I was on the links at St. Andrews and I visited the Loch Lomond course and the course at Inverness. In fact, I saw everything."

"It's an interesting country, isn't it, historically?" "It certainly is. Do you know they have played there for over five hundred years! Think of it! They showed me at Loch Lomond the place where they said Robert Bruce played the Red Douglas (I think that was the other party—at any rate, Bruce was one of them), and I saw where Bonnie Prince Charlie disguised himself as a caddy when the Duke of Cumberland's soldiers were looking for him. Oh, it's a wonderful country historically."

After that I let a silence intervene so as to get a new start. Then I looked up again from my newspaper.

"Look at this," I said, pointing to a headline. Navy ordered again to Nicaragua. "Looks like more trouble, doesn't it?"

"Did you see in the paper a while back," said my companion, "that the Navy is now making golf compulsory

at the training schools? That's progressive, isn't it? I suppose it will have to mean shorter cruises at sea in fact, probably lessen the use of the navy for sea purposes. But it will raise the standard."

"I suppose so," I answered. "Did you read about this extraordinary murder case on Long Island?"

"No," he said. "I never read murder cases. They don't interest me. In fact, I think the whole continent is getting over-occupied with them."

"Yes, but this case had such odd features—"

"Oh, they all have," he replied, with an air of weariness. "Each one is just boomed by the papers to make a sensation—"

"I know, but in this case it seems that the man was killed with a blow from a golf club."

"What's that? Eh, what's that? Killed him with a blow from a golf club!"

"Yes, some kind of club—"

"I wonder if it was an iron—let me see the paper—though, for the matter of that, I imagine that a blow with even a wooden driver, let alone one of the steel-handled drivers—where does it say it?—pshaw, it only just says a blow with golf club. It's a pity the papers don't write these things up with more detail, isn't it? But perhaps it will be better in the afternoon paper. . . ."

"Have you played golf much?" I inquired. I saw it was no use to talk of anything else.

"No," answered my companion. "I am sorry to say I haven't. You see, I began late. I've only played twenty years, twenty-one if you count this year. I don't know what I was doing. I wasted about half my life. In fact, it wasn't till I was well over thirty that I caught on to the game. I suppose a lot of us look back over our lives that way and realize what we have lost."

"And even as it is," he continued, "I don't get much chance to play. At the best I can only manage about four afternoons a week, though of course I get most of Saturday and all of Sunday. I get my holiday in the summer, but it's only a month, and that's nothing. In the winter I manage to take a run South for a game once or twice and perhaps a little swack at it around Easter, but only a week at a time. I'm too busy—that's the plain truth of it." He sighed. "It's hard to leave the office before two," he said. "Something always turns up."

And feared that he went on to tell me something of the technique of the game, illustrate it with a golf ball on the seat of the car, and the peculiar mental poise needed for driving, and the neat, quick action of the wrist (he showed me how it worked) that is needed to undercut a ball so that it flies straight up in the air. He explained to me how you can do practically anything with a golf ball, provided that you keep your mind absolutely poised and your eye in shape, and your body a trained machine. It appears that even Bobby Jones of Atlanta and people like that fall short very often from the high standard set up by my golfing friend in the suburban car.

So, later in the day, meeting some one in my club who was a person of authority on such things, I made inquiry about my friend. "I rode into town with Llewellyn Smith," I said. "I think he belongs to your golf club. He's a great player, isn't he?" "A great player!" laughed that expert. "Llewellyn Smith? Yes, he can hardly hit a ball! And anyway, he's only played about twenty years!"—Montreal Standard.

## Oxford Magazine Urges Tax Upon U.S. Tourists

Oxford, England.—A tax on American and other tourists is suggested by "The Isis," the Oxford University magazine, in an editorial directed against overseas visitors.

The tax, the magazine suggests, should be devoted to the Oxford Preservation Trust, which has been formed to prevent the encroachment of manufacturing plants into the university part of the city.

"The Isis" exclaims against "Oxford baring her beauties to the kodaks of Kansas and Khartum, receiving nothing in return save paper bags. If tourists must come to Oxford we see absolutely no reason why they should not be obliged to pay for what they apparently consider a privilege. The manners of these tourists are apt to be boorish in the extreme."

## New Southampton Quay Will Cost £65,000,000

Southampton, Eng.—Twenty ocean liners the size of the Leviathan will be able to dock at the new quay just ordered built here. But it will take twenty years to complete the job. Berths for two such liners, however, will be ready in two years.

A dock wall to be constructed will be the deepest in the world. It will be 3,500 feet long and will necessitate seventy-eight concrete monoliths, each weighing 7,000 tons, being sunk in the river bed.

The erection of this wall is part of a scheme begun two years ago which it is calculated will cost £65,000,000.

A man who had been asked to make his after-dinner speech as short as possible, arose and said: "I am asked to propose the toast of Mr. Dodshou, and I am told that the less said about him the better!"

## From Coast to Coast We're "Brither Men For A' That"



UNVEILING OF A MONUMENT TO ROBERT BURNS

Rt. Hon. Ramsay MacDonald, former Labor prime minister of Great Britain, officiated at impressive ceremony in Stanley Park, Vancouver, before a splendid gathering.