

SAN FRANCISCO, WESTERN GATEWAY OF THE WORLD

Where nature cut the Golden gate through and allowed the waters of the inland seas to mingle with those of the ocean, then and there was an augury of the time when the valley lands should be placed in still closer touch with the world of commerce and trade.

The early Californians, following the discoveries of the padres of the mission period, found that there were in the soil and in the climate of California great commercial values at home to be bartered abroad to furnish the basis of commerce. In a word, they discovered that San Francisco was calculated by topography, by easy access to valleys of extraordinary richness and the general riches of an unparalleled hinterland, or back country, to be a great seaport equipped with deep water, secure anchorage grounds covering a vast area and fed by tens of thousands of fruitful acres.

They had no railroad transportation, and commerce sought the easiest route to connect the Atlantic and Pacific seaboards of the territory of the United States which was then all of the mainland between Canada and Mexico from north to south.

They turned to isthmian routes, crossing Central America and sailing up the Pacific coast.

They also ushered in the era of

Ships Sail From Its Portals to the Harbors of All the Lands of the Earth

yachtlike clipper ships, trim as greyhounds and speedy beyond all preceding examples furnished by sailing craft. San Francisco became a seaport of great importance, made so in a relatively short period of time. The long headed men among the earlier Californians saw that, sooner or later, the narrow portions of the land between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans might be cut through and that this would so greatly enhance the importance of Pacific coast seaports as to cause practically a commercial revolution in which the whole world would be involved.

Nicaragua or Panama? The choice of canal routes was long discussed.

The French people tried to cut through the Panama canal, and their project, for financial and other reasons, failed. Sea commerce and sea transportation had to wait or to pursue the old route around the stormy cape, or to transfer freights and break cargoes at the isthmus of Panama or Darien, as it was once called, until some stronger power should pierce the land south of the United States and bring about an

interflow of the waters of the Atlantic and the Pacific.

The construction of the first overland railroad and the subsequent building of other railway systems connecting the two great seaboards of the United States intervened between the first great use of the port of San Francisco and the second great and final period that is forecasted by the completion and opening of the Panama canal for business. For many years sea commerce languished, for the reason that the railroads, being practically the sole distributors and accumulators of freights for shipment from the interior, moving in either direction to market or from market, held control of the situation with an iron grip. No one, however, in the time of the greatest success of the then existing rail monopoly, lost sight of the fact that the part sea and part isthmian possibilities of transportation existing were usable for through freights from the extreme west to the extreme east of the United States and for foreign commerce across the Atlantic.

Some years ago, when the Panama

canal project was a failure in the hands of the French management that had undertaken to construct the first American interocean waterway, the Nicaragua canal engaged local and world wide attention. Surveys were made and the subscriptions to the securities of the Nicaragua canal for a work that was never actually physically begun in earnest made up a large sum. The aim in view always was to use San Francisco as a base on the Pacific coast for world wide sea commerce and transportation.

When the Nicaragua canal scheme was abandoned by its projectors still another route to make a shorter passage from seaboard to seaboard, by using the Isthmus of Tehuantepec was brought into play. San Francisco still figured as the key of the situation, and that very naturally, because its position was in just the right place to give it all the advantages required for commercial uses.

Now the Panama canal is in construction and it will be completed possibly even earlier than 1915. This time San Francisco is coming into its own commercially and under conditions that may be considered ideal. The shipping and sea commerce of this port will increase in a few years in great annual measure, in tonnage and in amounts and values of cargoes transported in and out of the Golden gate. The past

The advertisement features a central map of the Hawaiian Islands, including Oahu, Molokai, Maui, and Hawaii (with Hilo and Kahului marked). Two ships are depicted in oval frames: the S.S. Lurline (top) and the S.S. Wilhelmina (bottom). The Lurline is labeled with a displacement of 13,000 tons, and the Wilhelmina with 13,250 tons. The background includes palm trees and a decorative border.

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