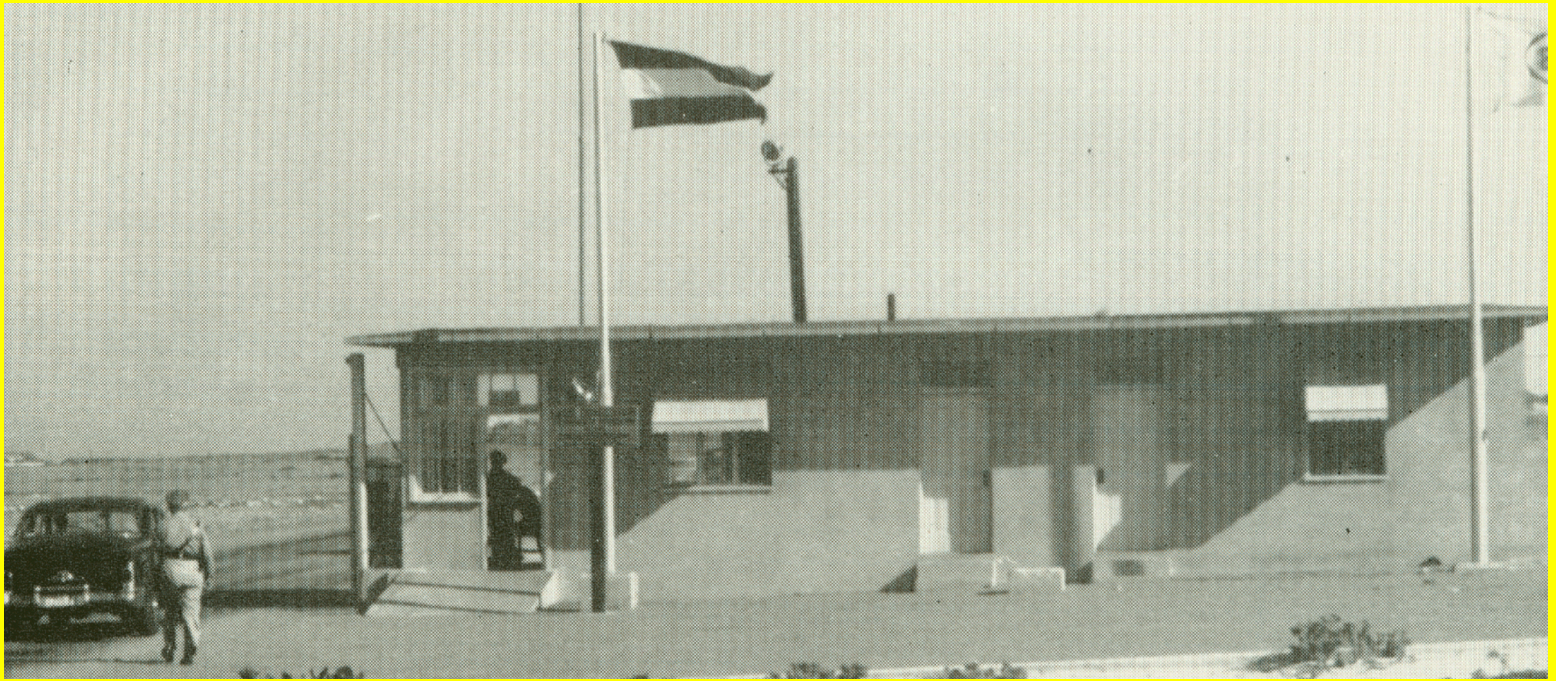


"HISTORY OF ARUBA"

BY

Lago Oil & Transport Co. Ltd. 1950

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Gate #6 into Lago Colony.

H I S T O R Y O F A R U B A

Lago Oil and Transport Co., Ltd.
Aruba, N. W. I.

- 1950 -

H I S T O R Y O F A R U B A

CHAPTER ONE

Geological Origin

When or how the island called "Aruba" first lifted its mass of coral, diorite rock and sand above the waters of the Caribbean remains largely a matter of conjecture. Some have said that it is a part of the rim of a gigantic volcano and others that it is a mass resting on a pedestal in mushroom fashion. Geologists who have studied the matter extensively have reached the conclusion that the island is the result of a batholithic action and actually the top of a mountain. This makes it probable that the island is a product of the same mighty travail of Nature that gave origin to the Rockies and the Andes and a continuation of the mountain range which terminates 60 miles southward on the Paraguana Peninsula of Venezuela.

Geologists are also agreed that violent subterranean movements have lifted and submerged the island at several widely separated intervals of time. When a well was drilled some years ago near Oranjestad, pieces of palm tree wood were brought up from a depth of 800 feet indicating that the surface was then at that point much higher above sea level than it is at present. Along the north shore, three distinct shore lines are discernible and in some places five, giving evidence that there have been at least five distinct movements upward.

In the last great upward movement which gave the island its present contour, the first heights to appear above the rolling seas were such points as Yamanota 566 feet; Hooiberg 495 feet; and Alta Vista 233 feet above sea level. Hooiberg is the most conspicuous of these because water, wind, and weather have given it the inverted cowbell shape that towers prominently above the surrounding terrain. In fact, the town of Santa Cruz, about a mile east from its base, covers ground that is nearly sea level. The presence of fossils, coral, diorite rock with varying mineral content, and wind and water carved tunnels and caves on the lesser heights, all display convincing evidence that these were once beneath the surface of the sea.

Since Aruba, geologically speaking, is a comparatively new island it is still affected by earth movements. In 1937 there were two very definite earthquake shocks which, although originating in the Paraguana Peninsula to the southwest in Venezuela, lifted the island at least 18 inches higher above the surface of the surrounding area.

This lifting is evidenced by the appearance of new shore lines, the drying up of certain old blowholes along the north shore and the opening of new ones among the coral reefs on the south shore, also by the more shallow waters of the lagoons, and by the exposed roots of the mangrove trees that grow along the shores. Needless to say, these recent earth movements caused considerable consternation and terror among the local residents, several tremors being felt in 1943. A most recent tremor was in March 1950.

The most noticeable of the prehistoric shore lines is that which begins at Punta Basora, the extreme northeastern tip of the island and runs irregularly northwestward about a half mile from and parallel to the sea. In some places, stone cliffs from 10 to 30 feet high with water carved indentations, caves and tunnels at their bases indicate that mighty waves once beat against them. From the cliffs, a flat rocky area or plateau, broken only by dry stream beds, extends to a second shore line where again there is a precipitous drop, in some cases several hundred feet from the water's edge. Only here and there do the cliffs along the sea recede sufficiently to provide sandy beaches or deep inlets. In some places, these cliffs are tunneled into grottoes and blow-holes into which the water rushes with great force causing miniature geysers with each successive wave. Beneath the clear rolling waters one can see the sea bottom dropping away abruptly, the waters on all sides of the island being from 40 to a 100 fathoms deep within a short distance from the shore.

At Punta Basora, huge blocks of the rugged, rocky, shore line have toppled toward the sea. At the water's edge, great masses of red and greenish limestone, highly fossilized and indicating the comparative youth of the island, may be seen. Nearby several small natural arches have been formed by the constant beating of the waves. At another point near Daimari, three of those arches may be snapped in a single photograph. Almost certain tragedy awaits anyone so unfortunate as to fall into the turbulent waves which are heaped into great combers and phosphorescent white caps by the constantly blowing trade winds. Only at the extreme northwestern end of the island does the shore line taper into sandy beaches along the water's edge. A few shifting sand dunes are found along the northern coast near Fontein and east of California.

Running lengthwise and roughly across the center of the island is a range of hills rising at Punta Basora to the coast and terminating in an elevation known as Seroe Grandi, 164 feet above sea level, near the western tip. This range is broken only by a few passes and gullies cut by the currents that once surged across the island when it was still beneath the sea and since deepened by streams which become rushing torrents during the few heavy rain squalls. Midway of the island a road, known as "The Continental Divide", connects Fontein on the north shore with the town of Santa Cruz on the south side of the range. This is one of the most picturesque drives on the whole island and at one point, Mira La Mar, the sea may be seen both to the north and to the south.

This range of hills is beneficial to the island because it does much to break the full force of the trade winds which sweep in from the east and allows moisture to be retained by the soil on the south and west sides. Here and there among the hills are small valleys and fertile spots in which palm trees and other vegetation flourish. The soil in these places would raise many kinds of fruits and vegetables if it could be successfully irrigated. The general barrenness is due more to the strength of the trade winds which quickly evaporate what little moisture falls and to the lack of regular rainfall in any quantity than it is to the lack of fertility in such soil as can be found.

Travelling westward along the southern shore one also finds further evidence that the island has had several shore lines. This is quite noticeable in the Lago Colony and near the Spanish Lagoon. A coral reef extending brokenly about a half mile off shore for almost the length of the island provides protected harbors at San Nicolaas and Oranjestad, and formerly at Savaneta until the lagoon there began to rapidly fill with sand. Because the water outside the reef is from 40 to 60 fathoms deep, ships from all points of the compass can now find anchorage in the splendid harbor that has been developed off San Nicolaas and the Lago Refinery.

At the eastern end of the island, caves and water carved tunnels may be found. In these, a phosphate deposit was found indicating that a mineralized sandy beach, well fertilized with guano, existed there centuries ago and was later covered with coral and rock. All along the southern shore one may find holes in the rocky surface which lead to a water level ten to twenty feet below. These natural wells provide brackish water which the natives use for laundry and other purposes. These water holes indicate that the whole southern shore is fairly well undermined with subterranean water pockets but there is little danger of the hard rocky surface ever caving in.

Midway of the island on the southern shore is the Spanish Lagoon which at one time may have extended across the whole island through the valley in which the town of Santa Cruz is located. Legend says that it provided a safe hiding place for such pirates as Henry Morgan, Blackbeard and others. At its south, water is pumped into the Dutch Water Distillery to be made fit for human consumption. About a mile inland to the north of this Lagoon is a large level flat of land which not too many centuries ago was either a large inland lake or actually the bottom of the sea. At the northern side of this bottom is a pass called "Rooi Francais" (French Pass), in which, a rather persistent legend relates, several hundred Frenchmen were ambushed and killed during one of the French invasions of the island.

From this Lagoon westward the southern shore line is very little above sea level. At Oranjestad is "Paardenbaai" (Horses Bay) so named because hundreds of horses were landed there from the Spanish Main for reshipment to Jamaica. Beyond Oranjestad much of the shore line provides safe beaches for swimming and for the beaching of fishing boats owned by the natives. Here many beautiful shells, large pieces of coral and other specimens of deep sea life may be gathered. On the extreme northwestern tip, at Arashi, stands a lighthouse to guide vessels coming from Venezuela, Columbia and the Panama Canal.

Thus approximately 12° above the equator and twenty miles off the shores of the Paraguana Peninsula of Venezuela, at $70^{\circ} 3'20''$ W L and $12^{\circ} 27'25''$ N L lies the island of Aruba, 14 miles long from tip to tip and $7\frac{1}{2}$ wide at its widest point. In an airplane, one can easily obtain a bird's eye view of its entire seventy square miles of surface, a view which is deceptive because the island appears somewhat barren and uninviting from the sky. Yet within its shores live peoples of many different races and an exuberant spirit of hospitality soon impresses itself upon the visitor to Aruba.

CHAPTER TWO

Colonization

Tradition rather than authentic history informs us that Aruba was first settled by tribes of mild natured Arawak Indians who came to the island by large canoes and small sailboats from the nearby coasts of South America. Very little is known of these early inhabitants except that they were farmers and fishermen who used earthen vessels, stone hatchets, and sabers of hardwood. It is also known that they buried their dead in sitting positions in vases of hard baked clay.

In due time another tribe of Indians known as the Caribs came to the island and subjugated what Arawaks they did not exterminate. The Caribs were fierce, warlike, cannibalistic, people who lived by hunting and fighting rather than by any settled occupation. They lived in caves carved partially by the wind and water and partially by their own labors. These caves are still to be found in the districts known as Ajo, Rooi Prins or Prince Pass near Fontein, and southwest of Santa Cruz in an elevation known as Seroc Canashito. When these caves were first discovered many stone hatchets, tomahawks and other implements were found in them. Today all that remains of the ancient Indian tenancy are the hieroglyphical markings still clearly seen on the ceilings and walls of the several caves. In some of these caves, there were recessed shelves in the walls that may have been used for beds or for utensils. There is little doubt but that the blood of both the ancient Arawak and the cave dwelling Carib still flows in the veins of some of the older native Arubans who live on the island today.

No one appears to know definitely how the island came to be named "Aruba". It is possible that the name finds its source in the Spanish "Oro-Hubo" meaning "there was gold", yet the contradictory fact remains that the island was named long before the gold on it was discovered. A more likely source is from the Guiarani Indian word "Oirubai" meaning "guide". It was also claimed that the name could be a slurred version of the Indian work "Arawak" since the Arawaks were its first settlers.

Although Christopher Columbus sighted the Venezuelan coast line in 1498, he did not land on the coast or on the A B C islands of the Caribbean namely Aruba, Bonaire, and Curacao. However, in May 1499, Alonso de Hojeda sailed on the Santa Maria for the new world he had seen on one of the earlier Columbus voyages. He was accompanied by Bartolome Roldau, amateur pilot of Columbus' first voyage; by Juan de la Costa, map-maker of the second voyage; and by a Florentine resident of Seville, named Amerigo Vespucci, whose predated account of the voyage omitted all mention of Hojeda and led to the continents of the Western Hemisphere being named in his honor.

Reaching the Gulf of Paria west of Trinidad, Hojeda sailed westward along the northern coast of South America. Pushing beyond the island of Margarita where Columbus turned northward, Hojeda discovered and landed on the island of Curacao on July 26, 1499. In August he reached Aruba and sailed on until he

had reached the Gulf of Venezuela to the north of Lake Maracaibo. No doubt he was led to make this further voyage by standing on the shores of Aruba and looking southward across the sea to Mount Santa Anna which lifts its peak nearly 3000 feet above the Paraguana Peninsula and is easily seen on clear days.

From that date until at least 1547, there is no recorded history of any voyager having visited Aruba. However, the Franciscan monks who settled on the coast of Venezuela in 1510 may have visited the island. It is also likely that such pirates as Henry Morgan, Blackbeard and others also visited Aruba since the Spanish Lagoon would provide a safe and secluded harbor for their ships. There are persistent legends that considerable treasure was hidden on the island by these men.

About the year 1547, Netherland traders searching for salt and other commodities came to Curacao, 70 miles to the east of Aruba. They immediately recognized the possibilities of profitable trading among the A B C islands. During the Eighty Year War between Spain and Holland, several trading companies were formed in Rotterdam for the purpose of systematically plundering Spanish ships plying the Caribbean. This was considered "Legal" piracy and it eventually led to the formation of the Dutch West Indies Company on June 3, 1621. By 1610 Dutch traders had completely broken the Spanish monopoly on Caribbean commerce by organizing one of their own. The Indies Company grew increasingly prosperous through slave trading which was especially profitable in the years immediately preceding the American Revolution. For nearly 100 years, Curacao was the center of slave transportation and trading, although commerce in salt, dyewoods and pearl fisheries helped to swell the coffers.

On July 10, 1634, the West Indies Company, a subsidiary of the Dutch Trading Company, whose head officers were in Rotterdam, finally wrested control of the island of Curacao from Spain. Later in the same year, the same Company took possession of Aruba by right of conquest and since that time the island has remained under Dutch rule except for a period of about 20 years. The first Governor of Curacao and Aruba was a Mr. van Welbeck who remained in office until 1636.

From 1636 to 1643, there was succession of Governors, then called commanders, until finally the Parliament of Holland appointed Peter Stuyvesant Governor of the islands. In 1644, he found it necessary to dispatch troops, who were largely refugee soldiers from the war then going on between Portugal and Brazil, to New Netherlands, now New York, to protect the Dutch settlers there from marauding Indians. On July 23, 1646, Stuyvesant became Governor of the Union of the A B C islands and New Netherlands with his headquarters being located in New Amsterdam, now New York City. It is interesting to note that during World War II, a former New York Governor, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, also of Dutch ancestry, found it necessary to send troops to protect the island of Curacao and Aruba.

Although a treaty had officially concluded the war which the Dutch Government had declared in 1672 on France and England,

fighting continued for several years afterward. In July 1677, a large armed fleet under command of Admiral De Estres sailed from France to do battle in the Caribbean. The fleet came to grief on the rocks at Aves, west of Bonaire. Donckner, the Governor of the A B C islands at that time, sailed for Aves and salvaged fifty five pieces of heavy cannon and other supplies from wreckage. Since this cannon was used for the defense of the islands by the Dutch until as late as 1800, there is little doubt but that the cannon lying on the beach in Oranjestad near the ruins of Fort William III are some of those salvaged pieces.

During Donckner's governorship, the famous Dutch pirate Jan Erasmus Reiming was very co-operative with the government and received its protection in his plundering as a reward. Piracy had become a well organized business in the waters near the A B C islands. The activities of such piratical bands were particularly notorious during the governorship of DeFay in 1730 when they constantly attacked ships laden with cargoes of slaves and valuable commodities and raided many coastal towns. The boldest of these was Balthami Carrion who attacked Aruba and murdered the members of the official family. Another pirate Juan Antonio, nicknamed "Dios do la Rabbi" (God of the Rebels), often hid in the caves of Aruba until he was caught and hanged in Curacao in 1736. A Frenchman by the name of De Estrades is said to have been the most feared of all the pirates of that period of plunder and terrorism.

When these notorious pirates had been captured and executed the islands settled down to more peaceful activities. Since both official and commercial interests were largely centered at Curacao, very little attention was given to conditions on Aruba. About 1750, the West Indies Company permitted a few chosen persons (who probably had paid well for the privilege) to settle on Aruba and engage in trading. Among those early settlers was one Solomon Levi Maduro, who on June 7, 1754, vowed that he would serve and obey the Commander at all times and remain loyal to the Noble Company (Proclamation of 1754, Curacao Archives).

However, the economic changes that affected life and trade on Curacao were naturally felt in Aruba since the two islands were separated by a comparatively short distance and ruled by the same government. In fact, many Aruban business establishments had their headquarters at Curacao and were managed by members of families whose homes were in Willemstad. When Curacao experienced a sharp decline in trading activities at the close of the American Revolution, we may assume that life on Aruba also felt the decline because its few business firms could attract still less trade than Curacao.

CHAPTER THREE

The Island's Government

As has been mentioned, with the exception of about 20 years, Aruba has been continuously ruled by the Dutch government since it seized the island in 1634. The seat of government for the Netherlands West Indies is located at Curacao where the Governor presides in the Name of Her Majesty, the Queen of Holland. Acting with him in passing upon all civil affairs is the Council of State consisting of representatives from several islands. In this council which enacts local rules and regulations are 15 members, 2 of whom represent Aruba. The Queen may declare void any acts of this Council. All regulations concerning criminal cases, commercial activities and proceedings in law are enacted by the Parliament of Holland and approved by Her Majesty.

In 1791 the Dutch West India Company was liquidated when its charter expired and its colonies came under the jurisdiction of the States General. In 1795 a French army invaded the Netherlands and brought the Netherlands and its possessions under French control. As a result, the long-standing treaty between the Dutch and the British was broken and the British attempted to take over the Dutch colonies in the Caribbean. To prevent British seizure, the French occupied Curacao. In 1801, however, the French withdrew their troops and the British promptly took over. The Treaty of Amiens, in 1802, brought about the restoration of the Dutch colonies, but when the Napoleonic Wars started in 1803, the Dutch colonies capitulated one by one to the strong British forces. Napoleon's bloody campaign finally came to an end, and the Dutch Islands were again restored to Holland by the Peace of Paris and the London Convention in 1814. Thus, after several decades of turmoil, during which the Dutch Islands in the Caribbean were shifted back and forth among the Dutch, British and French, the political Geography of the West Indian Islands was established in its present form.

On Aruba, the Dutch Government is officially headed by the Lieutenant Governor. Both the Governor and the Lieutenant Governor are appointed by Her Majesty and approved by Parliament. They remain in office until some valid reason makes necessary their removal. Until 1796, the governmental offices were located on Commander's Bay, now designated as Sabaneta, where a break in the coral reef along the southern shore provided a safe harbor for the sailing vessels of that day.

Meanwhile a village had been growing steadily near Paardenbaai (Horses Bay) or what is known today as Oranjestad. Situated north of the present town, the village was named "Playa." In 1798, Governor J. R. Lauffer moved his office from Sabaneta to Playa. Shortly thereafter Fort William III was built to defend the towns on the island. In 1830, while on an inspection tour the Governor of Curacao changed the name of Playa to "Oranjestad" (Orange City) in honor of the Royal House of Orange in Holland. Since that time Oranjestad has been the Capital of Aruba and all government offices are housed there in a building known as the Council House.

In Aruba, the government is administered by a Council of Police consisting of the Lieutenant Governor and 2 members who are elected by the local residents. This Council makes the local laws which are printed in Dutch and executed by the Dutch Police. Its acts are also subject to the supervision of the Attorney General at Curacao. Formerly the Police Force consisted of Military Police who were first appointed in 1928; of Civil Police appointed in 1930; and of Rural Police. The Military Police, after a period of training in Holland where they were residents took charge of traffic and fire law violations and were responsible for the general good conduct of all citizens. In cases requiring criminal investigations, the Civil rather than the Military Police had jurisdiction. They likewise supervised immigration activities, the loading and landing of boats and passengers, the checking of bars and restaurants and all similar functions. Technically the Rural Police were not members of the Police Force but rather were guardians of the Peace in country districts. It was their duty to see that all land leases and concessions were properly fenced so that all cattle were confined and that the law and order of the island was respected and obeyed. Recently the Police Force has been reorganized and the three corps (Military, Civil, and Rural) have been incorporated into the Police Department under the direction of a police commissioner. The Lago Oil and Transport Company also has a police or guard force whose sole duty it is to protect the property of the refinery and the peace of those residing within the concession. Generally speaking today there is very little thievery on the island and murders are infrequent.

To expedite its government, the island is divided into four sections which are subdivided into eight districts. The first province, Playa includes the Capital, Oranjestad, and the southwestern end of the island including the concession of the Eagle Oil Company. The second province includes extreme western end and such places as Noord, Westpunt, and Arashi where the lighthouse is located. In the third district are Santa Cruz near Hooiberg, and Balashi. Sabaneta and San Nicolas are the principal towns of the fourth province which extends to the concession of the Lago Oil and Transport Company. Every house on the island has its own number, viz., 242-D4, the last two characters indicating the district in which it is located.

While some land is privately owned as a result of concessions granted many years ago, the Government owns all the rest including that located within 200 yards of the shore. This land is in turn leased to land holders who must define the boundaries of their leases by erecting wire, stone or cactus fences. Thus one may see fences, usually of stone, running up and down the sides of the hills and into many seemingly inaccessible places. The rental varies according to the size and fertility of the land that has been leased. In some cases a lease may carry a rental fee of as low as Fls. 20.00 per year. On these leases, people may build their homes, the architecture of which must conform to certain standards, and raise what animals and vegetation the soil is capable of sustaining.

Until late in the 19th century, most of the people on Aruba were so poor that they had to be supported in part by government grants. With the coming of the aloe, mining, and oil industries,

economic conditions were greatly improved. It was then found advisable to inaugurate a system of taxation which includes, at the present, Income, Land and Furniture Taxes. Although in many cases the tax rates are low, the older residents will object to paying them.

Among other governmental activities is the maintenance of the monetary system. For many years, Spanish coins were used almost exclusively and the Peso of Eight (Pieces of Eight), having a value of 8 Reales, was the standard monetary unit of the island. Due to a shortage of silver coin, in 1796 the Governor of Curacao ordered these Pieces of Eight quartered with each quarter having a value of 2 Reales. Another unit called the "Golden Doubloon" with a value of twenty four Pieces of Eight was introduced in 1800. The "Golden Johanessen" having a value of 90 Reales or 11.25 Pieces of Eight was also used. Its weight in pure gold was set at twenty two carats. About 1825, the Spanish coins were converted into Dutch Florin, which has at present a value of about 54¢ in American money, became the basis of exchange. In recent years, the florin has been more commonly known as a "gulden", the word usually being pronounced "guilder". The metal coinage includes the penny, the $2\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ piece, the dime, the quarter, the silver guilder and the $2\frac{1}{2}$ guilder piece which resembles the American silver dollar in size. The paper currency is printed in units of 1, $2\frac{1}{2}$, 5, 10, 25, 50, and 100 guilder notes.

3 to 10 children so that the smallest are often allowed to play in the nude to help alleviate the clothing situation and cut down living expenses.

Members of the average Aruban family are generally very shy until you have won their friendship. The women and children stay close at home except when shopping or attending church. It is the younger generation that gives evidence of rapidly requiring modern habits of dress, speech and conduct. When the native Aruban youth is dressed in a white linen suit with his long curly hair well oiled, he makes quite a handsome figure. These young men like to dance and sing and are not greatly different from their fellows in other corners of the earth. The most noticeable trend toward modernity is noticed among the young married women. Many of the girls have a beauty of their own and are light in complexion. They like to wear brightly colored silks and satins and to perch their tiny hats on smoothly combed tresses in the approved modern fashion.

Because they live so close to nature and in so much fresh air and sunshine, there is not a great deal of illness among the Arubans although it is reported that cases of tuberculosis are increasing. The mortality among children is rather high. Sudden climatic changes have a very noticeable effect on the health of the natives. With most of them using only brackish water for cooking, drinking and laundry purposes, distilled water costing as much as 75¢ Dutch a 5 gallon tin, one might think diseases would be more prevalent. In one season when the rainfall was exceptionally heavy, there were 3 times as many deaths as in the drier seasons. The doctors on the island are well educated and equipped, and witchcraft and other forms of faith healing are not widely practiced. The Catholic Hospital at Oranjestad is quite large and equipped with modern apparatus and with the hospital maintained by the Lago Oil & Transport Co., the island has excellent medical service.

CHAPTER FOUR

Native Arubans

The native Aruban has features which indicate an Indian ancestry mingled with Spanish, Portuguese and Negro blood. Philip Hiss in his book "Netherlands America" states, "The Census of 1816 showed there were 564 pure blooded Indians on Aruba. But today, of the original population, neither pure Indian nor pure negro stock exists. There has been a fusion of the two racial strains and it would be impossible to say which has absorbed the other, for the Indian influence is here stronger than in the other Dutch Islands." The males are rather short in stature, dark bronze brown in complexion and agile as a cat when the occasion demands it. His hair is black and curly and usually plastered to the head with hair oil or pomade. Usually he is clean shaven although beards are sometimes seen. He is a quiet, clannish sort of person when not among his own people but he likes to sing, dance and play musical instruments, usually guitars and accordians, at an Aruban wedding fiesta. The hot tropical climate has hardened his skin to wind, sand and hot rocks, for generally he is scantily clad and seldom wears more than leather soled sandals on his bare feet. Only on Sunday does he dress up in more modern attire and condescend to wear his shoes. Those Arubans who have risen above the laboring class, of course, dress in the same manner as other business men. Crowds of native Arubans returning from their early Sunday morning masses closely resemble the average American congregation so far as neatness in appearance and color in wearing apparel is concerned.

Considering the hot devitalizing year around climate of the island which is alleviated only by constantly blowing trade winds, the native Aruban is a fairly energetic worker who until recent years was content so long as he had sufficient food, clothing and shelter to make life comfortable. Now that he earns higher wages, he has built more permanent and comfortable homes, bought new automobiles and other modern conveniences; still there is nothing that he probably enjoys more than his noonday siesta, his bottle of rum and the chance to show his skill in the ancient game of dice. When the men are working in groups they are constantly chattering with each other in Papiamento and at times gesticulating so vigorously that one would think that a brawl were in progress.

The older Aruban woman is heavy-set and solidly built. Her complexion is also quite dark and her face is rather plain. Some are occasionally seen smoking a cheroot while walking along the streets of Oranjestad or San Nicolaas on their shopping tours. Usually she is dressed in a plain "Mother Hubbard" style calico dress and wears leather soled sandals on her stockingless feet. Other young Aruban married women are attired in white or colored dresses of a more modern type. When in mourning, all women dress in black, wearing long black woolen shawls over their heads and completing the costume with black oxfords and stockings. Even in the older type of homes the average Aruban housewife appears to keep her home as clean as circumstances will permit and to take good care of her family's needs and wants. Usually the family has

CHAPTER FIVE

Aruban Culture

Due to the cosmopolitan composition of the population of the ABC islands, it is only natural that the native dialect, Papiamonto, should reflect the influence of many languages; Indian, African, Spanish, Portuguese, English, French, Dutch, and American. However, as a result of the short distance between the islands and Venezuela, the effect of the Spanish language is more pronounced. The Papiamonto spoken in Aruba differs from that of Curacao in that it contains a larger percentage of Indian and American words. Dutch is the official language in both civil and military circles but Spanish and English are also spoken to a large extent. Most officials and businessmen are able to converse freely in all of the above-mentioned languages.

Dutch, English, and Spanish are taught in the schools, but Papiamonto remains the language that is commonly used during the out-of-school hours. The Dutch Government maintains several large schools in San Nicolaas and Oranjestad where pupils may complete the equivalent of a Junior High School Course. Government subsidized parochial schools are located at Oranjestad, San Nicolaas, Sabaneta, Santa Cruz, and Noord and are operated in conjunction with the Catholic churches at those locations. The Lago Oil & Transport Co., Ltd. operates an American school within its concession to provide a high school education comparable to that available in the United States. The general curriculum of the Dutch schools is similar to that prevalent in Europe. No colleges or universities have been established on Aruba, and it is the common practice of parents who are financially able to send their children to Curacao, Holland or the United States for further education.

Although many of the earlier emigrants to Aruba were of the Catholic faith, organized worship was not permitted on the island for many years. When missions were established Catholicism spread rapidly until today it has the greatest following. The greater number of the priests are from Holland, and they and their predecessors have established congregations and constructed churches at Oranjestad, San Nicolaas, Sabaneta, Santa Cruz, Noord and Tankilendert. The architecture, interiors, and equipment of these churches compare favorably with those anywhere in the world.

The oldest and largest Protestant movement in Aruba centers around the Dutch Reformed Church (circa. 1855) in Oranjestad. The services are conducted in the Dutch language and are attended by the greater number of the Dutch nationals and officials. Smaller congregations of the same denomination meet at Piedra Plat and San Nicolaas. The pastor of these churches can be considered to be a salaried employee of the Dutch Government and as such holds an established position in the government.

The Wesleyan Methodist Church in San Nicolaas serves the negro population primarily, although Arubans, Spaniards, East Indians, and several other nationalities are represented in its

membership. This organization uses the Anglican liturgy; the services are conducted in English, and the pastors are invariably English missionaries. Small Seventh Day Adventist and Pentecostal congregations are also active in San Nicolaas. Although quite a number of Jewish families live on the island, there is no regularly constituted congregation or synagogue.

The religious activities of the Americans on Aruba are primarily centered around the Community Church in the Lago Concession. Services are interdenominational, and the church is operated and maintained by an association composed of Lago employees.

Courtship customs among native Arubans today are very similar to those found in the States. Courtships begin at an early age but marriages do not generally occur until both parties are at least eighteen years old. Some years ago, courtships had to be carried on under the scrutinizing eyes of members of the girl's family. Until the engagement was announced either a parent or some older member of the family had to be present during all calls and accompany the couple to all public functions. In the course of a few weeks, the suitor had to declare his intentions to marry or ask release from further attendance upon the young lady. If all concerned were agreeable the engagement was announced and often sealed with a ring. The courtship could then continue without molestation. Today this custom is rapidly dying a natural death.

Several weeks before the chosen wedding date, the couple appears at the Office of Civil Estate in Oranjestad to ask permission to marry. If one or both of the parties are of Dutch descent, the consent of the parents is required unless the man and woman are over 30 years old. If the couple are not Dutch citizens, the marriage laws of their own country prevail. If permission to marry is granted, banns are announced by the bride's pastor or priest. No dowry or other conditions interfere with wedding plans although the bride's father may pointedly suggest that the new son-in-law have a home under construction if one is not already completed. In the course of years members of Dutch and Aruban families have inter-married but generally speaking the Arubans tend to marry within their own group.

On the day of the wedding, the bride carefully dresses herself in a white gown with a long white veil falling over her shoulders. She wears white gloves and usually carries a bouquet. She may be attended if the wedding is a large affair and usually it is. At the proper time she is met by the groom who is dressed in black with black shoes, white tie and white gloves. The civil marriage is performed, generally on Thursday mornings, in the Office of Civil Estate and sealed by a ring and the shaking of hands. Then in the late afternoon, the religious rites are read in the local church. The wedding party then retires to the bride's home for a fiesta which is characterized by feasting, drinking, music and dancing. Under extenuating circumstances both the civil and religious rites may be said in a home.

After the marriage feast has ended, it is a custom among Arubans that the bride continue to live alone with parents if the husband has been unable to secure or provide a home. Divorces are

few in the case of infidelity or incompatibility; each individual is expected to air his or her grievances before his pastor or priest who makes every effort to effect a reconciliation. When his efforts fail, he then recommends that the local government grant the couple a divorce.

Death is a tragedy no matter when or where it occurs, but in a native Aruban home, it is still more catastrophic because life at all times is a struggle for existence and happiness. Infant mortality is rather high and in the case of an infant's death, there is real grief in the family. After a brief ceremony, the tiny casket is carried by four men selected by the family from the home to the church and cemetery. The procession is led by a group of young girls dressed in white and carrying candles and flowers. They in turn are followed by a group of boys and the family. To witness the slow progress of one of these processions is indeed a touching sight.

All burials on Aruba must be made within 24 hours after death occurs since no bodies are embalmed. As soon as death occurs, the local undertaker is called and with the family and its pastor or priest services are arranged. Two or more persons are appointed to go from house to house announcing the time of the funeral since it cannot be announced in time by the daily newspaper. All old clothing of the deceased including the bedding is removed from the premises and buried or burned. The corpse is dressed in a complete new outfit, usually of black color. A wake or watch is kept with a liberal quantity of liquid refreshments aiding the watchers to remain awake. If the deceased has died in Christian faith, a short prayer service is held in the home, then the procession to the church begins. The casket is never opened after it leaves the home. Other customs are similar to those followed elsewhere including the tolling of the church bell as the procession nears the church.

Cemeteries are within a few rods of the church and here the remains are interred in graves of the usual depth. Sometimes after a year or so, the body may be disinterred to be placed in a family vault which is built in the shape of a small chapel or house of cement and native stone. Each grave has a cross and is frequently decorated with vases and wreaths of natural and artificial flowers. Formerly cemeteries were divided into two sections, the smaller portion being reserved for those who died outside church membership. Today, such a person may be buried in a public grounds maintained by the government. After burial is completed, a fiesta is usually held at the home of the deceased. A period of mourning which lasts from one to two years begins immediately.

CHAPTER SIX

Foreign Residents

In a sense all residents on Aruba have been foreigners, for even the Arawak and Carib Indians presumably found no one living on the island when they arrived. Since that distant date, people from all points of the compass have arrived to make their homes so that at least forty five different nationalities are represented. These for the most part live together in a democratic spirit of toleration and friendliness. Phillip Green, in his book, "Our Latin American Neighbors", says that there is a greater degree of racial tolerance in Latin America than can be found in the rest of the world. The spirit of hospitality and mutual co-operation prevailing on Aruba appears to substantiate his statement.

Because there are no historical records, it is difficult to say how and when the first groups of settlers came to Aruba. It would appear that the first white men to consider settling on the island were Hollanders and Spanish and Portugues Jews. All of these were searching for profitable trading locations and many of them found prosperity on Curacao and Aruba. Descendants of these early families are still living on the island and still finding it profitable to do so. According to figures released by the Central Bureau of Population Registration, the total population of Aruba in 1943, was around 36,000 persons, not including American troops stationed here at that time.

Being descendants of the original inhabitants, the native Arubans make up the larger half of the population. The Dutch is the next largest and since 1634 these thrifty people have contributed much to the island's progress and development. They still continue to control the financial, commercial and utility interests that are located outside the refinery concessions. The operation of the gold and phosphate mines served to bring many families of English extraction to the island and not a few of the crews on the present "lakers" are English. Today Polish, German, Hungarian and French Jews are to be found among the refugees who have decided to settle at least semi-permanently in Aruba. Other nationalities including Venezuelans, Spaniards, Portugues, Chinese and many other peoples have smaller representations but all have worked together in a cooperative spirit to make the island what it is today. At the present there are approximately 5,000 negroes living on the island. Most of these have come in from St. Martin, Barbados, Saba and other Caribbean islands to find employment in the local refineries.

All persons who come to Aruba to remain for any length of time must not only be gainfully employed but they must also deposit with the Dutch authorities sufficient funds to guarantee their transportation back to the place from whence they came. After living on the island for a period of five years, an immigrant may make application for permanent citizenship. As an evidence of good faith, a fee of at least Fls. 200. is required which deposit is returned if the application is disapproved. If the citizenship is

granted, the total fee, then becomes approximately 10% of the applicant's net income during the period he has lived in Aruba. These restrictions guarantee that those who become citizens shall not become public charges.

Since the Capitol of the Dutch government was located in Oranjestad, it was only natural that most of the Dutch people would settle there. They have built beautiful homes and churches and opened business establishments which may have many connections with other countries. Many have grown wealthy in the process but generally speaking the Dutch have been reasonably fair and progressive in their government and commerce on the island. Oranjestad is now a modern city with hard surfaced streets, a modern water and electrical system, two banks, a cinema, hotels, cable office, market and many other up-to-date utilities.

Once the leading town on the island was Sabaneta but with the opening of the harbors at Oranjestad and San Nicolaas, it became purely a residential village with a large Catholic church and school and a few stores and several bars. Because of the traffic which centers around the harbor and refinery, San Nicolas is the trading focus of the island. A majority of the stores are controlled by Jewish merchants although Chinese, East Indians, and other nationalities are also represented. San Nicolaas also has its water system, two cinemas, a United Seamen Service center, post office, police station, churches, schools and other public facilities. While once Santa Cruz enjoyed prosperity because of its proximity to the gold smelter at Balashi and its location on the road between San Nicolaas and Oranjestad, it makes no pretense of being a business town today. The large Catholic Church and school are the center of its cultural life. While the Lago Colony has no business establishments other than its Commissary and Club, it may be considered a town and is so described in another chapter.

Although in San Nicolaas, many stores and homes are built along typical Latin American styles, homes in Oranjestad and nearby country districts are primarily Dutch in design. Most of the San Nicolaas merchants live in Oranjestad and have built their homes there. Constructed of cement, one story in height and modernistic in design, they are equipped with all up-to-date conveniences. They are particularly fireproof since the floors are of beautifully arranged tiles or of colored concrete and there are no furnaces, heating stoves or fireplaces to create fire hazards. The windows and doors do not need to be glassed or screened because there are very few flies, mosquitos and other pests on Aruba.

Homes of less affluent people in Oranjestad and San Nicolas are built in plain rectangular fashion of cement with red tile roofs or are of wooden construction with tin roofs. Many of these homes are wired with electricity and supplied with running water making them quite comfortable. Only the frame houses, thickly clustered on some streets, make one wonder what would happen once a disastrous fire got under way. These of course are occupied by poorer people and sanitary conditions are not the best. When one nears the island

by boat or air, his attention is at once attracted to the low square brilliantly colored houses scattered over the landscape. These follow the Dutch style, are constructed of concrete block and plaster, and have roofs of red tile or tin sheeting.

One never finds two houses standing side by side painted in the same color scheme, nor does he find any house with doors facing the northeast winds. Each house has its own coloring, apparently the more brilliant the more satisfying, and the corners, from eaves to foundation, are often decorated with strips containing various designs said to have come down from the original Indian inhabitants but no one seems to be able to interpret their significance. While these homes have no modern plumbing, many are lighted with electricity supplied by "windmill" generators which can always be operated by the never failing winds. These homes are kept clean and the white plastered walls are simply decorated with religious pictures. One is surprised to come upon well kept homes on almost impassible roads far back in the hills showing that their owners have great pride in their properties.

Naturally the first homes on Aruba were not well constructed and few remain to show what improvements living on the island has made in recent years. The old Aruban house was made out of a frame work of branches and boughs interlaced with twigs. On this, mud mixed with grass and straw was plastered and soon hardened into brick-like walls under the tropical sun. The roofs were constructed in the same manner. The house was seldom more than 12 or 15 feet long by perhaps 8 to 12 feet wide, and a tall man would be able to reach the ridgepole without much stretching. At one end was the fireplace and oven with its squatty, square chimney on the outside. Such houses had dirt floors and a lean-to protect the grain or to shelter the patient donkey if the family owned one. These houses are rapidly disappearing and the Dutch government does not permit additional ones to be built. In another score of years, the homes on Aruba will be among the neatest, cleanest and most modern to be found in any of the tropical countries of Latin America.

CHAPTER, SEVEN

Climate and Vegetation

While the island is located about 12° north of the equator, it is free of much of the languid sultriness of the tropics. It has no deep soils, lush forests or dense jungle growths to catch and hold the scanty rainfall. Constantly blowing trade winds drive away fogs and destructive storms. The temperature varies less than ten degrees from month to month, the average being about 85 degrees. The nights are usually cool enough for comfortable sleeping and, during full moon, sufficient light to read or see great distances. It is said that the coolest nights are during full moon cycles. The clouds, miles long with a straight edge underside are exceptionally beautiful both day and night. During most of the year the bright points of the "Southern Cross" and other constellations are easily seen. Sunrises and sunsets are beyond description, rainbows were never more complete or beautiful, and dawn and twilight are matters of moments rather than of hours.

Beyond all doubt Aruba's climate is about the most enjoyable of all the islands in the Caribbean. Being tropical, the island has its wet and dry seasons. The wet season begins about mid-September, reaches its climax in November when as much as 5" may fall, and then ends in January. Other months of the year have a very scanty fall, the least amount falling in March and April. The average yearly rainfall is 15" although it has varied from 8" to 27" in a single decade. During the wet season, short heavy showers are numerous and sometimes seem to fall out of the smallest of clouds. Although storms may be seen passing over the Venezuelan mainland to the south and over the Caribbean to the north, very few storms of any destructive force have visited Aruba. However in 1932, a three day storm in which a wind of hurricane velocity, blowing opposite to the usual direction, hovered over the island. Electric lines were blown down, circuits were shorted and many homes drenched by the downpour. None of the life-long residents of the island could ever remember a storm of like intensity. In the fall of 1937 a waterspout whirled its way across the island in 15 minutes time uprooting fences and gardens, wrenching many garages from their foundations and causing damage to other obstacles in its path. Sometimes the trade winds which blow strongly during nine months of the year will reverse their prevailing direction from east to west and almost suffocate the Lago Colony by fumes and smoke from the refinery. These winds have an average velocity of 15 miles per hour and through the years have carved many of the lime stone rocks into fantastic shapes.

As previously indicated, soil of any depth is scarce on the island's surface. However because of the perfect drainage offered by its perpendicular coral underlay, what soil exists is well aerated and vegetation grows rapidly when the cooling showers break the hot sunshine. If the rainfall were more general during the year, Aruba would blossom as an island paradise. As it is, without cultivation and fertilization, the soil readily grows cactus, aloes, sissal, various weeds, thistles and shrubs and divy-divy trees. The divy-divy tree always attracts attention because of the peculiar bent over or hunchback shape it assumes when not

sheltered from the winds. An excellent dye can be made from its bark and wood and a distillation of its berries, which look like yellow thorn apples, yields a very good extract. Being extremely hard in texture, divy wood can be carved into canes and other novelties and carries a lasting luster when highly polished.

Although the tree cactus tortures beast and man with its needle pointed spikes, natives have found it useful for making fences. On wash days when wet clothes are hung on such a fence, there is very little danger of the wind blowing it away. Unlike the divy tree, the cactus will grow erect sometimes reaching a height of twenty feet. It carries many branches which bear prickly purple pears in mid-summer. Sometimes in a particularly dry year when other vegetation is extremely scarce, goats will knock over and paw a cactus until its spikes are crushed and they can make a meal of the rest of the stalk. One of the other species is the melon shaped cactus whose blossoms look like purple topknots. One often wonders how these cacti can grow so profusely on rocks where there is no soil visible and the hot sun quickly evaporates whatever moisture may fall.

Looking somewhat like a century plant, huge sissal plants with their long broad, sharp tipped leaves growing in cluster form are also plentiful where there is sufficient soil to sustain their growth. In midsummer, large stems, which may reach a height of 12 feet or more, grow from the center of the cluster and bear yellow flowers. The fibers of the sisal leaf can be used for the making of rope or for the weaving of coarse colored mats and rugs.

Cococut and date palm trees grow profusely on the beaches and along the beds of streams. Several very beautiful groves may be found at different places, the finest of them being on the grounds of the Aruba Country Club. The coconuts are of an inferior grade and no attempt is made to grow them on a commercial scale. Along the southern shore and on the reef one finds a species of mangrove which the natives call "watapani" growing densely enough to form a veritable jungle in some places.

Among the fruits that can be grown on the island are oranges, tangerines, limes, grapefruit, papaya, cinnamon apples, and bananas but due to the lack of soil and sufficient rainfall no attempt is made to grow sufficient fruit for marketing purposes, most of it coming in from the mainland of South America. At one time peanuts were grown in large quantities but now it is cheaper to import them. A few cashew trees may be found but other nut bearing trees are very seldom seen. The natives also grow a maize or "kaffir corn" which in good seasons provides grain for cooking purposes and for feeding of cattle.

Because they are easier to cultivate, flowers are extensively grown in both town and country. Almost every house has its own individual garden. Sometimes porches on the second floor are converted into beautiful flower gardens where noonday siestas and social parties may be enjoyed. Among the flowers shrubs cultivated are orchids, gardenias, hibiscus, roses, honeysuckle, oleander, bougainvillea, Spanish moss, poinciana, croton, magdalenas, zinnias, begonias, cassias, acacia, wabis, poinsettias and many others.

The list seems to be limited only by the space and soil available and the patience and perseverance of the gardener. Vegetables such as tomatoes, okra, radishes, red beets, water-melons, celery, pumpkins, cucumbers of the gherkins type, and many others will grow, but seldom in sufficient quantities to make the growing enjoyable and profitable.

While birds of beautiful plumage are to be found, the bird population is not what one would expect it to be on a tropical island. Their absence is probably due to the scarcity of soil which in turn makes for a lack of insects and worms on which the birds might feed. Most prolific are the wild parakeets, commonly known as "ki-ki" or as "love birds", chuchubis, and a blue feathered bird which closely resembles the American bluejay. One may also find Venezuelan orioles, wild canaries and troupials which are brilliantly colored. The chicken hawk, the toucan which may be mistaken for a hawk, the wild doves called "totolito" and other small birds abound. Along the southern shores one may see white herons, snipes and occasionally red flamingoes fishing on their long stork-like legs, also pelicans which drop into the sea like a dive bomber when they have sighted a fish. Among all the bird life, one is safe in saying that very little if any of it is native to the island. Domesticated fowl includes the pigeon, chicken, turkey and duck.

The reptile population is likewise smaller than one would expect. Years ago many snakes, rattle, coral and other species, were found on the island but these have been practically exterminated. Extremely prolific however is the small lizard of the salamander and chameleon type which is to be found everywhere. They are harmless and catch many insects that would otherwise plague the local residents. In a few spots, edible iguana reaching a length of from 3 to 5 feet may be found. Next in prolificacy are the centipedes and scorpions. Their bites are often quite painful and cause large swellings, but are not fatal. Generally speaking the island is a very safe place to live so far as poisonous reptiles are concerned.

Many kinds of tropical fish are to be found in the sea ranging in size from the tiny guppy and sea horse to the giant rays, sharks, kingfish and barracuda. Sea urchins, starfish, shrimps, shell and coral life, all are likewise prolific. Rock lobster or crayfish are caught in limited quantities in the lagoons on the south shore, and an edible species of sea turtle is frequently netted by the local fishermen. Most of the fish caught locally are "red snappers" which are considered the best tasting. While the local fishing fleet is not large as it once was, fishing continues to be a favorite pastime among rich and poor alike. Local markets are kept fairly well supplied by additional cargoes brought in by schooners from the coast of Venezuela.

None of the animal life seen on the island today appears to be native to it. Most numerous are the half wild "Cabretta" goats and sheep which forage the island in herds of from 20 to 50 head. One wonders how they find enough to eat on such barren place but most of them seem quite well fed. The donkeys found on the island are descendants of those brought here for the mining industries or shipped over from the mainland. They carry heavy burdens

and human beings and seem to get along very well on a diet of wiry grass and kaffir corn fodder and grain. Although most travelling is by bus or private car, the patient donkey will provide transportation for many years to come for those who live in the more inaccessible points of the island. A few horses and cows may be found but they are almost curiosities. A runty variety of rabbit appears to be the only wild mammal encountered.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Island Transportation

In the days of the Arawaks and Caribs and for many years thereafter, the only means of transportation from and to the island was by large canoes and small sailboats. As time went on these boats were replaced by schooners which maintained a sort of schedule between Aruba, Curacao and Venezuelan ports. These were built without cabin space so that passengers had to spend all their time on the open deck trying to protect themselves from the spray and keeping out of the way of the crew and tackle. At night they slept under the cover of an old sail if a piece could be found. No meals were served but a potion called "cawfee" was served each morning by a "mess" boy. After one experience, few travellers cared to repeat the trip unless it was absolutely necessary. In those days Sabaneta was the port of entry to the island and later Oranjestad succeeded it.

When steamboats began to ply the waters of the sea, small steamers infrequently put in at Paarden Baai at Oranjestad. These were mostly from Holland and England. Later, as the mining industries were developed, the island became a regular port of call for Red "D" and Royal Netherland ships. In 1927 the San Nicolas harbor was opened to deep sea traffic although tankers continued to offer the chief means of transportation between Aruba, the States, and other ports of the world. While these tankers were built primarily to transport oil, they carried comfortable staterooms for a limited number of passengers. It was not until 1938 when steamers of the "Grace Line" stopping at Aruba made travel to and from the island a voyage of pleasure and luxury. Grace Line service was discontinued during the war and has not yet been resumed except for service by the smaller cargo vessels with accommodations comparable to those on the oil tankers.

As soon as travel by airplane became prevalent, easier access to the ABC islands was in prospect. As early as 1932, a flying field was laid out on the outskirts of San Nicolaas. Later an experienced aviator brought a Loenig Amphibian to the island. With this plane, the Caribbean Flying Service was established and carried mail and passengers between Aruba and Curacao for a period of nine months without mishap. In the fall of 1933, the local service was taken over by the "Koninglijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij N.V.", more commonly known as "KLM", with headquarters located at Curacao. A new landing field was laid out and buildings to house the ticket office, waiting rooms and other facilities were erected. It was a Gala occasion when on December 23, 1933, the first plane, a Fokker built in 1929 and still in daily service, arrived on Aruba after having flown from Holland via Spain, Africa and South America. In subsequent short years, the service was improved and today the airline provides efficient transportation to the U.S. South America, Europe and many other points.

The oldest path of transportation between different points of the island were Indian trails which in turn became the rough, rocky dirt roads that crisscross the island in fantastic fashion.

Until 1930, the principal highway between San Nicolaas to a short distance beyond Sabaneta, the surface was fairly smooth but at that point the road turned northward to bypass the Spanish Lagoon. It wound its way through the valley to Frenchmen's Pass near Balashi, then through the Pass and eastward toward Oranjestad passing Hooiberg on the south. It required more than an hour to make the journey by car if one lived through the severe jolting and even longer if one traveled by horse and buggy.

In 1930 a pontoon type concrete bridge was built across the Lagoon near the distillation plant and the highway was extended to Oranjestad. Near the Lagoon, a modern concrete road, the finest on the island leads from the highway to Santa Cruz over the higher ground west of Balashi. With the completion of these roads, busses of the station wagon type, taxis and private cars soon appeared in great numbers and at last local residents could travel quickly and comfortably from one end of the island to the other. With the advent of more speedy transportation, traffic laws had to be enacted, danger signals erected and license fees collected.

The roads from San Nicolaas to Santa Cruz and Oranjestad continue to be the principal roads on the island although more recently several other surfaced roads have been constructed and it is now possible to travel comfortably by car to nearly all parts of the island. Many unimproved roads remain; however, these roads are simply widened paths over rocks and gullies so that one gets little enjoyment traversing them in a car. Practically all points on the island are accessible making it possible for many native refinery employees to live in the country rather than in the towns. The streets of San Nicolaas and Oranjestad as well as those of the Lago and Eagle Colonies are all hard surfaced.

CHAPTER NINE

Aruban Industries

As narrated in the chapter on Colonization, the first citizens of Aruba, the Arawak Indians, occupied themselves with farming and fishing. It is doubtful that they engaged in any commercial trading because their small boats were not too seaworthy. They were succeeded by the Caribs who won their livelihood by fighting rather than by trading. Since no satisfactory locations for salt beds or pearl fisheries were found on the island and since there is no record of any slave trading, the chances are that the pirates were the only ones who engaged in any trading with the native for many years.

From time to time, however, certain explorers who were looking for new sources of profit felt that mineral bearing ores could be found on Aruba. These rumors of undiscovered wealth reached the offices of the West India Company in Holland and in 1725 Paules Printz, a Norwegian miner, was sent to investigate the possibilities. Although he was recalled to Holland before he had completed his surveys, there are records on file which show that he was convinced that metallic ores were present. It was not until a hundred years later, in June 1825, that gold was actually discovered. The first findings were alluvial gold that was washed from the hillsides into the sandy streambeds in the eastern end of the island. Upon the announcement of its discovery, the Governor of Curacao, accompanied by his aides and bodyguard, reached Aruba on August fourth to claim possession of the discoveries. Later at Balashi, Seroe Plata and other points on the island primary gold was located in quartz formations. The mining of these deposits was a difficult task because the gold could often be obtained only by smelting. In only a few places was gold to be found in veins or small pockets. Mining was profitable only because native labor was so cheap and easy to obtain. From time to time nuggets of gold have been found, the largest of them weighing a little more than six Netherland pounds.

From the time of its discovery in 1825 to the year 1832, the Dutch government controlled the mining industry on the island. During that period several hundred pounds of pure gold were shipped back to Holland. In 1832 the Government relinquished its control and permitted anyone to mine gold. Shortly afterward, a mining concession covering a 40 year period was granted to L. J. de Long in The Hague but it was cancelled in 1866. Then the next year a concession covering 36 years was awarded to Franciscus Isola. This was not successful and in 1869 the concession was transferred to a Messrs. Ricket & Co., of New York. In 1872 this company sold its rights to the Aruba Gold Mining Company but the industry still did not prove profitable and the concession was returned to the Government in 1900. For eight years, the industry was at a standstill; then in 1908, the Aruba Goud Maatschappij, a Dutch Company was formed and in the first year of its operation paid a 25% dividend to its stock holders. Two years later it had paid dividends amounting to over 50% on the original investments of the stock holders. Under the company's "tributers system", the landholders did the mining and brought the ore to the smelter where the miner was paid according to its gold content. Ruins of the larger smelters are still to be

seen at Balashi near French Pass and at Bushiribana on the North coast where the huge stone ruins are often mistaken for an ancient fort. Many parts of the structure and smelter equipment at Balashi are still there but they are being slowly destroyed by the elements. Gold mining as an industry disappeared when the daily wage scale maintained by the Dutch Shell Company at Orangestad and the Lago Company at San Nicolaas made the operation of the smelters unprofitable.

While gold was first discovered in 1825, the presence of a phosphate bed was not discovered until 1874 when J. H. Walter Gravenhorst uncovered the phosphate deposits at Punta Basora, the extreme southeastern point of the island. Seven years later in 1881, the "Aruba Phosphate Mij" was organized and in the first 14 years of its operations exported more than 250,000 tons of phosphate on which the export duty amounted to two million florins.

As the mines were extended, the mineral was sometimes found in layers up to 20 feet thick. A small locomotive capable of drawing a score of cars carried the phosphate from the mines over a narrow gauge railway to the loading piers at San Nicolaas where it was shipped to France, England and America. From the year 1881 in which the mines began to operate to their closing in 1909, more than 742,250 tons of phosphate containing an average of 90 to 98% pure phosphoric acid were shipped. As with gold, however, the oil refineries eventually made phosphate mining unprofitable and at the present only caves are left to show where the excavations were made.

Although it developed concurrently with the mining of gold and phosphate, the aloe industry was the only one of the three to survive largely because for many years the major part world's supply of raw aloe gum was exported from Aruba to large pharmaceutical firms in the States and England to be further refined into "Aloin". As a cathartic ingredient, it is unequalled, for no other satisfactory chemical substitute for it has as yet been discovered. The medicinal properties of the Aloe have been known since the days of Alexander the Great, 333 B.C., yet Aruba is practically the only place in the world where aloes are grown on a commercial scale. It might be mentioned incidentally that aloes referred to in the Bible was very probably the gum of the eagle-tree of India since it was used for perfume and embalming. The aloe of Aruba certainly would not do for perfume since it has a very pungent garlic odor.

There are 180 known species of the plant but only three produce the world's supply of raw aloe gum and aloin. They are named Cape, Curacao, and Socotrine. The Socotrine variety grows on the Island of Socotora off the west coast of Africa and it was from this island that the first plants were brought to Aruba in the 19th century by Dutch West Indies colonists. In a short time it was discovered that Aruba had an almost perfect climate for rapid propagation with the result that Aruban aloes have the highest "aloin" content of any in the world. The gum averages 18 to 20% aloin content as compared to the 10 to 12% found in varieties grown elsewhere. Some aloes are grown in Curacao, Bonaire and nearby Venezuela but, until recently, Aruba had a virtual monopoly on the source of the world's supply.

To look out over the aloe fields of Aruba one would assume that the long rows of regular plants were the result of careful planting but such is not the case. Once started, the aloe takes care of its own propagation with no manual assistance other than that of cutting shrubs and woods from the fields. With just the right amount of tropical sunshine mellowed by the trade winds, the long cool nights and intermittent showers, the aloe multiplies with astonishing rapidity.

The aloe is a plant that strongly resembles a small century cactus plant with its stemless cluster of thick, long, sap-filled leaves edged with saw teeth and a sharp pointed tip. Some species reach a height of from 3 to 5 feet but on Aruba, due to the annual cuttings, the average plant is from 12 to 16 inches tall. As the plants first start, the leaves are yellowish green but with age these turn to a dark amber brown. If not cut during the harvest clusters of small tubular flowers will grow on a spike which rises from the center of the leaf cluster. These flowers however do not produce seeds, reproduction taking place as shoots and runners sprout out at the soil level of the clusters to form new plants.

The harvest of the aloe crop begins in April after the rainy season has definitely ended and extends until the harvest is completed usually sometime in October. The plant is harvested by cutting the leaves off near the base of the plant with a short sharp knife. The cutter must be skillful to make the cutting at just the right angle to prevent the death of the plant. The leaves are then placed in long tilted boxes which look like feed troughs with an opening at the lower end. Placed in the trough cut ends down, the heat of the sun causes the thick garlic smelling juice of the leaves to drip into the trough and in turn into a container, usually a tin can. The resulting fresh lemon colored sap is then poured into wooden tubs which are carried, one on each side, on a donkey's back to a collection shed where it is transferred to and stored in larger drums and vats.

Years ago, the natives evaporated the water content by filling sheep and goat skins with the juice and allowing them to hang in the hot sun until evaporation was completed. Today this process is speeded by pouring the sap into large copper cauldrons of from 40 to 50 gallons capacity, skimming off the refuse, and boiling it over a wood fire for 12 to 15 hours. During the boiling, it is constantly stirred with a long handled spoon or ladle. The residue becomes pitch black and opaque. It is then ladled into paper lined boxes of uniform size and cooled until it has the consistency of warm asphalt. The boxes which weigh approximately 125 pounds each are wrapped in burlap and delivered to one of the several warehouses in Oranjestad where it awaits exportation.

While it is in no sense organized business, cabinet making may also be said to be a local industry. While the native Aruban is reputed to be a poor carpenter, he is nevertheless a beautiful worker in woods. Cabinets of all kinds are produced and painstakingly polished by hand until they shine with beauty. Much of the furniture used in many homes has been locally produced. While there is very little workable timber on the island, the divy-

divy tree wood, which is like teakwood in its hardness, can be carved and polished into beautiful canes, stands and other articles. Wood for cabinet making is usually imported from the States or nearby South American countries where mahogany and other woods are still obtainable.

In addition to these industries, some natives earn a living by fishing and raising goats and by marketing an excellent tanning extract made by boiling the berries of the divy-divy tree. Some are engaged in sailing commodities to and from South America in sailboats of various size, many of which are equipped with Diesel engines. Because of the great variety of employment to be had, it is said that no man needs to be poor on Aruba.

CHAPTER TEN

Aruban "Black Gold"

Until February 1942, when German submarines made their brief but spectacular attack on the oil refineries at Aruba, many millions of people were unaware that the island was on the map, much less than its defence was vital to the success of Allied transportation plans. Without the millions of gallons of high octane gas, Diesel oils, and other products that were exported from Aruban refineries, the bombing sorties of the Allied Air Forces might never have hastened the end of the war. "Black Gold" put Aruba definitely on the map and made it one of the first places in the Caribbean area to be strongly defended.

"Black gold" came to Aruba in a rather interesting manner since there are no natural oil deposits beneath its surface. Some years prior to 1894 large crude oil deposits were discovered near San Cristobal in the State of Tachira which lies on the extreme southern shore of Lake Maracaibo in northern Venezuela. Here petroleum flowed so freely that it could easily be collected in shallow wells and seepage pits. These San Cristobal deposits were later discovered to be only a small part of a huge deposit that covers an area of more than 40,000 square miles in the Maracaibo Lake Basin. Geologists believe this pocket to be one of the largest ever discovered.

The basin itself is bounded on the south and west by mountains and the lake or lagoon is an almost landlocked gulf which drains into the Caribbean through Lake Tablazo and the Gulf of Venezuela. At its mouth north of Maracaibo, the Zapara Bar made impossible the safe entry vessels drawing more than ten feet of water. This barrier meant that although the oil deposit was amazingly large, the product could only be exported in shallow draft, flat bottomed tankers to some other location where there would be a harbor deep enough to permit ocean going tankers to carry it away. The closest available harbors were to be found at Curacao and Aruba and that is how and why "Black Gold" came to Aruba in 1923.

For sometime after 1894 when the first concessions for exploiting the deposits of the Basin were granted, the development of the industry progressed very slowly. Various companies were organized but it was not until 1924 that officials of the Pan American Petroleum Corporation arrived in Oranjestad to arrange terms for a lease on that section of the west end of the island now known as the Eagle Oil Company's Concession. The first step toward the actual location of the oil industry on Aruba was taken early in 1927 when the Royal Dutch Shell Company laid plans to erect a small topping plant at Druif about a mile west of Oranjestad. "De Arend Petroleum Mij", a subsidiary of the Royal Dutch Shell Company, was formed and the actual construction of the plant began in September 1927. Some delay was caused by the construction of a dock inside the reef where necessary material could be discharged since every piece of material had to be imported. Houses were extremely scarce and some of the workers were sheltered for a time in half tents while the staff was housed in a building then known

at San Nicolaas. Until it was built as many as two billion barrels of crude oil were transferred from the smaller into the larger ships in a single month.

The harbor, sufficient in size to hold 2 large ocean tankers and 5 lakers, was opened on November 17, 1927. The terminal possessed 8 crude oil storage tanks of 70,000 barrel capacity each and the necessary steam pumps to transfer it at the rate of 2,500 barrels an hour. Soon after operations began it was seen that loading facilities could be easily expanded by the simple process of adding more power to send the crude oil streaming through the pipe lines. It also became apparent that a refinery located nearer the source of supply would further simplify transportation problems.

Accordingly, in August 1927, a group was sent out from the New York offices of the Pan American Petroleum and Transport Company to survey the possibilities of erecting a refinery somewhere near Maracaibo Lake district. After inspecting several possible locations in Venezuela, the party returned to Aruba and decided that the best site was at the San Nicolaas harbor where the transfer station was already in operation. At that time, the site that is now thickly covered with stills, tanks, pipes and other equipment was a barren plot of cactus, coral and rock. On February 24, 1928, construction actually started.

Many delays were faced, largely because of transportation difficulties, inadequate equipment, and housing conditions, but in December 1928 the first piece of equipment was placed in operation. Topping stills were started in January 1929 and other construction continued apace. Succeeding years saw the addition of shops, office buildings, more tanks and stills, cracking plants and numerous other refining and shipping facilities. While no longer the world's largest refinery in terms of rated capacity, the Lago Refinery still processes more oil, month in and month out, than any other refinery in the world.

as the "Astoria Clubhouse". Company offices were temporarily opened in Nassau Street, Oranjestad, and a commissary was opened nearby. After surmounting many difficulties, the Company was able to move its offices to the Concession and by early May 1928 the plant was ready for operation. The first shipment of crude oil from the Basin arrived in June and the plant operated from then on until early in 1943, when the war caused the Shell Company to shut down the plant and use its tanks for storage purposes.

Although criticized from many angles, the oil companies have done much for life and culture of the people of the countries in which they have operated. Concurrently with the construction of the Eagle Refinery for example, a complete new "Colony" was established on the concession. Permanent houses were built and occupied by employees. A commodious clubhouse was built, two concrete tennis courts and a swimming pool were constructed, roads were macadamized and other improvements made. A hospital accommodating 16 patients was built in 1929. Thus a bit of new life, drawn largely from English and Dutch sources, was introduced into the life and culture of Aruba.

While the Arond Company was busy developing the "Eagle Refinery" another development was under way at the opposite end of the island. In 1924, the British Equatorial Oil Company, operating in Lake Maracaibo sold its rights and interests to the Lago Petroleum Company which was a producing company on the Lake without any means of disposing of its products other than by sale to other companies. Incidentally, the name "Lago" is the Spanish word for "Lake". By taking over the British Company, the Lago Company obtained enough small vessels, called "lakers" to transport its own crude oil to outside ports. Meanwhile the corporation was investigating the possibilities of securing a satisfactory terminal either on the Paraguana Peninsula or on Curacao or Aruba.

After due consideration, it was decided in July 1924 that the bay at San Nicolaas would be an ideal spot for future developments when a deeper channel into the bay was dredged. The haul to San Nicolaas was also much shorter than that to Curacao. By October 1924, a final decision to locate at San Nicolaas was reached and the Lago Oil and Transport Company Limited was incorporated in Canada. Dredging of the channel and harbor began as quickly as it could be arranged. Until the harbor was completed, starting in November 1924, the Company's two small lakers discharged their tankage in a depot ship anchored off Oranjestad. Early in 1925 a third laker arrived and the Lago Shipping Company was incorporated in London shortly thereafter. In July 1925, the British interests in the Lago Company were sold to the Pan American Petroleum Corporation which retained control until it was in turn taken over by the Standard Oil Company in 1938.

The dredging of the bay was completed in mid year of 1927. Additional bottoms rapidly increased the size of the fleet plying between the Lake and Aruba and operations developed on an ever enlarging scale. In those days, the port was simply a place where the oil was pumped from the lakers into larger vessels capable of carrying the crude elsewhere for refining. At the beginning of the project there were no plans for the building of a refinery

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Aruba's Little America

The men who came to Aruba to construct the Lago Refinery were mostly American citizens who had acquired plenty of experience in various phases of the oil industry in the States. They were first housed in barracks, tents, and sometimes wherever they could find a place to sleep. In those days, fresh meats, fruits and vegetables were unknown. Everything that could not be purchased locally, and that was very little, had to be obtained in cans. Chickens and eggs could be bought on the island in limited amounts but ice to keep food from spoiling had to be transported from Curacao in open barrels. Coral and cactus covering the refinery site soon wore out the best of shoes if they were not soled with pieces of rubber belting.

It was soon evident that something definite would have to be done about the housing situation for many of the employees were anxiously looking forward to the day when their families could join them. Houses which had been constructed were turned into bachelor quarters before they could be arranged for families. A mess hall was built and a hospital opened. After many delays, other houses were finally completed and Mrs. Gus Cosio had the honor of being the first family to arrive, landing on July 13, 1928. Other families arrived soon afterward and it was not long until the "American or Lago Colony" had developed into a good sized village.

When work at the refinery permitted, as many as fifty new bungalows would be under construction in the Colony which had been platted to the east of the refinery. This construction proceeded until approximately 570 bungalows were completed. These together with the bachelor quarters which continued to house the men without families, provide living quarters for 2500 men, women and children. The bungalows are constructed along the same general lines with only the number of rooms determining the difference in size and shape. They were built of stucco and stand about two feet off the ground on piers that rest in pans of crude oil which prevent centipedes, ants, and other pests from entering. The steps at the front and back are not attached to the porch for the same reason. Each bungalow is commodious in size, having from 3 to 8 rooms and is comfortably equipped with a modern bath and well planned kitchen in which is found roomy cabinets and closets, sink, electric refrigerators, stoves, and other modern devices. The Company also furnishes sufficient furniture and other equipment for ordinary housekeeping.

In early 1949, a group of 50 new houses was completed. These houses are built along modern architectural lines and are constructed entirely of reinforced concrete and concrete blocks. All of the houses have two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a living room, kitchen, maid's quarters and garage. A group of former Army buildings, located at Colorado Point, have been modernized and furnished and these are used for temporary housing of newly arrived families.

Despite the fact that the homes had to be built on barren coral and rock, patience and persistence have worked wonders so that almost every bungalow has its plots of flowers, shrubs and sometimes green vegetables. Soil had to be brought in from other points and fertilized or transported by ship from the mainland. Water was made available and soon it was discovered that many kinds of shrubs and flowers would thrive if properly protected from the strong winds until they are firmly rooted. In these gardens will be found croton, begonias, gardenias, hibiscus, guave, papaya, banana trees and many other plants and shrubs. Goats, lizards, ants and other pests severely tried the fortitude of many a resident but today the Colony has streets and yards that look as nice as similar communities in the States.

Affairs of the Colony are largely administered by the Colony Service Department which is under the supervision of the Company. The Colony has its own post office which operates as a branch of the local Dutch post office in San Nicolaas. Colony residents may buy provisions, clothing and household wares in the Company Commissary at prices comparable to those prevailing in the States. A weekly mimeographed newspaper, called the "Pan Aruban" publicizes local and international news items, announcements, etc.

With the advent of employees' families, a one room school supervised by one teacher was opened in 1929. Today the elementary school occupies three large, well equipped buildings and a new modern high school has recently been completed. In 1949 the Colony schools have a faculty of 29 and an enrollment of 400 pupils. Thus, with comparable faculty and facilities, these schools are able to offer to the children of expatriate employees educational opportunities comparable to those found in the average community in the States.

Because so many persons employed by the Company would be in need of medical attention from time to time, construction of a \$200,000 hospital was started in 1937. The unit was hardly complete when an expansion program for the refinery made a change of sites necessary. The whole building was jacked up, put on special cars and hauled on a specially built railroad to the top of a hill about a mile further east where it now commands an excellent view of the northeastern shores of the island. There is a large staff of doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and other helpers constantly on duty. Patients may have private rooms if desired and the wards are divided to accommodate both native and foreign employees of the Company and their families. In 1949, plans are being made to construct a new hospital on a site adjacent to the present one. This new hospital has been necessitated by the increase in Company employment and the expansion of hospital services which combine to tax the present facilities. The new hospital will be of radically modern design and will be a fire-proof concrete structure.

The opening of the "Esso" Clubhouse on New Year's day, 1930, was a gala event in the Colony. It was then called the "Pan Am" Club and was organized to provide recreation and entertainment for members of the Company's foreign staff and their guests. In 1939, when the Standard Oil Companies took control of the refinery, the name was changed to the "Esso" Club. As the Colony

grew alterations were made to permit the building to accommodate the increasing number of social and community functions that were held by the Club. A roofless theater was built for dances, silent movies and local theatricals. In 1935 the theater was roofed and new modern sound movie equipment installed. A Little Theater Players group was organized and quite a number of Broadway plays were reproduced with great success. This beautiful clubhouse was destroyed by fire on June 7, 1942. It was replaced by steel barracks type buildings which were to serve until such time as transportation and available material made the construction of a new club possible.

A new modern club was completed in late 1949 and opened with fitting ceremonies on December 9th. This club is located on a point between the large and small lagoons south of the colony. The Club building is a handsome modern concrete structure designed by the prominent Miami architect, Robert Law Weed. Among the facilities are a completely enclosed theater, a game room, stag bar, cocktail lounge, soda bar, reading lounge and out-door dance floor.

As has been mentioned, the Company's first mess hall was opened in a shed located on the site of the present Personnel office. Early in 1929, a large and better equipped mess hall was built where the present dining hall for the bachelor employees is located. In 1934 a new Club restaurant was opened but never proved successful so that a section of the "dining hall" was set aside for the serving of meals to those in the colony who desired restaurant service. Only those who hold Company permits may eat in this private dining hall. They have the privilege of being accompanied by guests.

In 1924 a large one story building housing some very fine bowling alleys was opened, previous alleys having been destroyed in the Clubhouse fire, and has proven a popular recreational spot for men and women alike. An excellent swimming beach is located along the southern shore beyond the large ball parks where baseball may be played at any time of the year. There are also numerous tennis courts, a sailboat basin, a golf course and other recreational facilities which make living in the Colony equal to living at many summer resorts.

Thus the Colony has grown in a short span of years from a few scattered houses to a thoroughly modern community. It is not temporary in nature, for the oil industry promises to prosper for many years to come on Aruba. Comfortable living conditions, an all year around good climate and other attractive advantages have led many residents who came for short terms of service in the refinery to decide to make Aruba their home for many years to come.

CHAPTER TWELVE

"War Comes to Aruba"

While a garrison of Dutch troops has been stationed on Aruba for scores of years, generally speaking the island had no need, after its early colonial days, to protect itself from invasion nor did war affect its economy until the present conflict made it to one of the most important supply points in the Allied offensive. The presence of one of the largest world's largest refineries and its strategic location between Panama and Trinidad made its protection imperative. That is how and why war finally came to Aruba.

After the island was restored to the Dutch Empire after the French and English invasions by the Peace of Paris only minor episodes disturbed the peace until 1929 when a Venezuelan uprising called for military action because some of the participants fled to Aruba. For sometime thereafter Arubans were treated to the sight of Royal Dutch Navy destroyers patrolling the waters between the island and the mainland. In due time the incident was settled and no other disturbing events happened until 1940.

Prior to September 1939 when Germany plunged the world into its greatest conflict, millions of gallons of gasoline, Diesel oil and other petroleum products were shipped from Aruba to Holland, England, France and other European countries. The Royal Dutch Shell Company, and later the Standard Oil Company controlled practically all filling stations in Holland and large numbers in adjacent countries. Even before Germany invaded Holland on May 10, 1940, measures were being taken to protect the refineries on Aruba by increasing the strength of the Dutch garrison.

At that time the Dutch garrison was housed in its barracks at Oranjestad and military service was a prosaic affair. With the coming of war however all men between 18 and 45 years of age immediately became subject to draft. Thus far only those between the ages of 18 and 25 have been drafted. These will remain in service until they are properly trained when they may be released to serve in local industries unless they are needed elsewhere. Because they are needed for local defense and could not easily be transported to other Dutch possessions, most of these soldiers live on the island and have free access to their homes after training hours. The ordinary soldier in addition to food, clothing and shelter receives 60¢ Dutch per day as his pay. Commissioned and non-commissioned officers hold rank comparable to that of other armies except that their pay is much lower. Much of their present equipment has been secured on the Lend Lease basis. Since the draft increased the garrison beyond the capacity of the quarters at Oranjestad, the Lago labor camp at Sabaneta was converted into a Dutch encampment. When the new quarters now under construction at Oranjestad are completed, the garrison will again be stationed there.

Immediately after the declaration of war, French negro troops from the island of Martinique were hurried to Aruba to reinforce the Dutch garrison. In a short time however France had fallen so the French troops were replaced by English troops which were quartered in the Sabaneta Camp. These troops were known as "The King's Light Shropshire Infantry". As the war grew in intensity, Scotch troops landed in September 1940 to replace the English troops that were urgently needed elsewhere. Meanwhile, the United States Army was mobilizing and when the Japanese struck at Pearl Harbor the urgent necessity of guarding Aruba as a vitally important oil supply depot was recognized. Accordingly on February 11, 1942, a contingent of United States Army Troops replaced the Scotch troops and immediately began to organize the defense of the island.

The troops and their supplies had scarcely touched shore when on February 16th an unknown number of enemy submarines began to shell the San Nicolaas harbor and the Lago Refinery. Six tankers at anchor outside the harbor reef were sunk and many lives lost. Shells flew widely over the refinery and concession but fortunately caused only minor damage that could be quickly repaired. The possibility of invasion and combat spurred the troops to a feverish effort to install the necessary defenses. Today the enemy would receive a reception he would not soon forget if an invasion of the island. All American Forces on Aruba operate under the united command of the United States Navy.

Shortly after the United States Military Headquarters had been established, groups of U.S. airmen arrived to maintain a constant patrol over the Caribbean sea. Military secrecy forbids a description of the size or location of these forces. Suffice it so to say that they have been so alert and proficient that they have sunk more submarines than the enemy was able to sink ships. Because of its strategic value and location, it is likely that there will be some representation of the United States Army, Air and Naval Forces stationed on the island for many years to come.

It should be mentioned that the civilian population enthusiastically co-operated in the island's defense by immediately organizing civilian defense forces. A rigorous blackout of all homes, business establishments, street and automobile lights was inaugurated. During the dark of the moon the blackout is so effective that very little travelling is done at night. Each town has organized its air raid system and built numerous air raid shelters. All residents are outspokenly on the side of the Allies and a deep seated spirit of patriotism for both the Reigning Country of Holland and the good neighbor, the United States, prevails.

Resistance of all nationalities on the island have received the American Forces most cordially and have done all within their power to entertain them in their homes and clubs. Although by December 1942, both ground and air forces had their own chaplains, the former a Roman Catholic and the latter a Protestant, the writer, local congregations endeavored to make service men feel welcome in their midst.