

## DOWSING IN ARABIA

By COMMANDER C. CRAUFURD

**F**IRST let me preface this small article by the assurance that I know very little regarding the art of dowsing. During fourteen years of travel in Arabia I have not found anyone sufficiently interested in dowsing to give me assistance in investigations that are very primitive while they own the merit of being pioneer.

Arabia is a country larger than India. The major part of its terrain is regarded as waterless. In my own experience, of many thousands of miles of Arabian travel, I should suggest that many of the apparently waterless districts could develop a sufficient water supply for moderate cultivation and moderate population if the art of dowsing received proper appreciation. Water is wealth in a desert land. Having spent the best years of my life among the Arabs, I can appreciate the blessings that the dowser may soon give to a poverty-stricken peninsular.

Some fourteen years ago I found myself free to work in Arabia. At that time Aden was considered waterless and the European residents were unable to distil sufficient water for the full requirements of drinking and washing. Two years earlier I had seen the tragedy of a British regiment practically wiped out through undertaking a gallant and emergency desert march, falling exhausted and in many individual cases perishing, on a hot afternoon. They thought they were in a waterless desert; frequently they passed within fifty yards of running water!

So soon as I was free to act, I determined to find water for Aden. A skilled civil engineer gave me some very valuable hints which he had gathered from examination of the terrain, his examinations being incomplete since he had undertaken most of his survey while within range of enemy fire.

His information showed me that I should have to live in the desert for a while. The resident of Aden could hardly welcome such a suggestion, since his information suggested that looting bedou were in the proposed neighbourhood of my investigations. However, I knew something about Arabs and soon got over that difficulty. My scouts would give me warnings of intended raids. I would immediately send out courteous invitations to tea and the sheikhs from those disturbed areas would tell their youth that they could not go looting a man who has just asked them to a feast.

My knowledge of dowsing consisted of half an hour of instruction in England and a few hours of practical test, when I

located a spring and sunk a well in my own garden to prove that I had some dowsing sense.

I had got hold of the idea that dowsing is largely a matter of uric acid in the blood increasing sensitiveness to water current. So I reasoned that if I drank enough whisky overnight to feel thirsty in the morning, I might increase my dowsing abilities. I had no great objection to that form of martyrdom. After sacrificing a case or two of whisky to a good cause, after many hours of thought—clear thought in day time, confused thought at night and bemused reasoning at dawn—I gave up that dowsing method. There may be something in the theory, but not much, and not enough to count.

Next I tried fasting. It was a convenient method and saved disappointment when my 'boy' had forgotten or had failed to get any provisions. My dowsing rod appreciated that game more than my stomach did. I should suggest that the scientific explanation lies in the fact that when you are well famished your nervous system is highly keyed.

In the desert you can do as you will. I decided that I could do my dowsing barefoot, better than when dry-shod. I hope that most dowsers will agree with me that, though individual tastes may seem absurd to others, the tyro who has induced self-confidence is more likely to succeed than he who is dubious of his abilities. So at dawn and sunset I wandered around the desert barefoot and clad in a topee with a loose cotton shirt and pyjama trousers. At other times of the day it was too hot to work in comfort. Cactus bushes were a nuisance, for when I concentrated on my job I took no notice till I fell into a cactus bush. Cactus thorns are sharp and often more than an inch long. I discovered most of those that lay in my path, until my feet soon grew too hard to trouble over such trifles. Scorpions scared me badly, till I learned that a scorpion has no more desire to meet you than you have to make his acquaintance. I did not realize, until later, that there were some risks of sand asps. Of course, everyone thought I was mad, for I did not explain my antics. There is a saying that Allah protects the mad. Certainly I came to no harm.

I finished my dowsing and gave a verbal report to an Aden authority. My report was sufficiently interesting to merit further investigation. A mining engineer was appointed to make a professional survey.

I was in an awkward position. I did not want to butt in or to rob him of his job. But the desert has its hardships and the engineer looked rather frail. I offered him my assistance, but he refused the offer. He was dead within a month.

Other and better methods were employed. It was rather curious that the next professional location was within six feet of my number 2 location ; for the water shed seemed to me a large one and I could have given that number 2 location up to two hundred yards further south or three hundred yards eastward.

‘To the man who can wait, all doors will ultimately open.’ They bored well over a thousand feet and when they seemed ready to make for Australia by underground route, I dropped my hint. The authority deigned to listen to an amateur. ‘After the first hundred feet, you knocked a hole in the bottom,’ I suggested. I am very much of an amateur and not much of a dowser. The general got his bath all right. That is the main thing.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

IVY LODGE,  
THETFORD,  
NORFOLK,

*15th June, 1934.*

DEAR COLONEL BELL,

You will no doubt be pleased to hear of a very unusual experience and one that will further substantiate my theory of electrical power. I was advising for a new supply at the Kettering Steam Laundry (Mr. P. W. Wilmot) on Monday last, and after searching the whole district, police station, cattle market, churchyard and church, parish hall, the main street, Midland Bank and Messrs. Boots' chemist shop, I found, in all, nine subterranean streams over this wide area, and discovered the head of the spring in the rectory garden close up to the main boundary wall of the laundry. On the other side of the wall, two dynamos were running full speed and I could find no trace of the spring although within two yards of the head the other side of the wall.

I searched the workrooms, which were full of girls, etc., at work, but I could only find a trace of water near the huge boiler. It was a difficult job amongst all this machinery and my twig would not move or respond. So quite innocently Mr. Wilmot said, ‘Let me stop the works and give you a chance’, and he stopped the two dynamos which were in the room opposite the spring on the other side.

To my surprise and astonishment, my twig twisted and turned over and over much more strongly in this room than in the garden on the other side of the wall ; consequently we were