

SOME MEMORIES OF BAPCO

BY

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INTRODUCTION

This book, if it can be referred to as such, is not a history of BAPCO. As the title indicates, it is no more than a record of the writer's own memories, going back to the 3rd January, 1937 to which he has added the recollections of others.

A great deal more, than will be found in these pages, has happened in Bahrain since the first four men arrived on the 23rd May 1931 to drift an oil well at the foot of Jebel Dukhan. The writer, however, has made no attempt to comment on the changes, which the discovery of oil has brought to the island; this he is more than happy to leave to others.

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Awali,
Bahrain.
May 1965.

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CHAPTER I

THE BEGINNING

On the 23rd May 1931 the B.I. Ship from Basra anchored off Manama and amongst the passengers who disembarked that morning were four Americans from the Standard Oil Company of California. They had come to drill an exploratory oil well in Bahrain.

With the party were two others who had joined the ship in Kuwait. One, New Zealand born Major Frank Holmes, who will always be remembered as the man who focussed attention to the possibility of oil existing in the Arabian Gulf, and the other was Thomas Simon his interpreter and factotum. The latter was soon to become the first employee to be recruited by The Bahrain Petroleum Company Limited and has remained in continuous service from those early days to the present time.

The arrival of Mr. E.A. Skinner and his three companions was to prove for Bahrain the beginning of a new era and for Major Holmes it was the culmination of his efforts, extending over a decade, to interest oil men in the area.

Major Holmes' own interest in the Arabian Gulf went back to the days immediately after the First World War when, as a mining engineer who had served with the British Forces in India and the Middle East, he had become attracted by the possibility of mineral resources existing beneath the vast areas of desert sands.

At first his thoughts had been confined to minerals and metals and his search led him up and down the coasts of the Red Sea and the Gulf where he missed no opportunity of meeting Arab Rulers, traders and the people. He soon learned, however, that to them fresh water was a commodity more important than precious metals and, for some years, he turned his attention to drilling search of water. His efforts were not in vain as his successes gained him the confidence of the people and promises of concessions to enable him to search for oil.

In 1920 the urgent need for financial backing took him to England and almost at once he was successful with a group of investors having mining interests in Africa and Asia. A company, the Eastern & General Syndicate Limited, was quickly formed and Major Holmes himself was retained as its agent.

Back, once more, in the Gulf he lost no time in making approaches to the King of Arabia and the Rulers of Kuwait, Qatar and the Trucal Coast.

During his many journeys up and down the Gulf, Major Holmes had become a familiar figure in Bahrain and in 1924 he made an offer to drill two water wells at no cost if the venture proved to be a failure but, for success, he was to be paid a sum of money and consideration given to his application for an oil concession.

Immediately a mining engineer was sent out by the Eastern & General Syndicate to make a geological survey and determine the site of the two wells. Drilling began and, after many difficulties, water was found. So pleased was the Ruler, the late Shaikh Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa, that the Company was granted a two year option, dated 2nd December 1925, to acquire an exclusive oil prospecting licence over the Bahrain Islands with a right to a Mining Lease over an area of 100,000 acres.

Once again Major Holmes set off for London to report his successful negotiations for the oil concession in Bahrain and for others he had secured in the al Hasa province of Saudi Arabia and in the Kuwait Neutral Zone, the boundaries of which had been agreed at the Conference of Ojoir in 1922. Whilst he was there he tried, on behalf of the Eastern & General Syndicate, to interest British oil companies but he met with little success.

At the same time the Eastern & General Syndicate was urged by the geologist, who had made the survey of Bahrain prior to the drilling of the water wells, to carry on the search for oil itself, but the directors were not prepared to do so, preferring to sell the concession to others.

The lack of interest displayed by British companies caused the Syndicate to look elsewhere. They turned to the United States and in November 1927 an option was granted to the Eastern Gulf Oil Company, a wholly owned subsidiary of Gulf Oil Corporation, to acquire the concession, just three days before the Syndicate was due to make an option payment in Bahrain. Subsequently, in November 1928, the same company was granted an option to acquire any concession the Eastern & General Syndicate might obtain after selecting the first 100,000 acres.

Gulf did not wait long before taking action and on Christmas Eve 1927 a team of geologists consisting of R.O. Rhoades, accompanied by W.F. Eastman and C.F. Shalibo, left New York. They were met by Major Holmes and Thomas Simon in Bahrain during January 1928.

Rhoades' fieldwork was carried out between 6th February and 19th March 1928 and in his report he referred to the water wells, which were the result of Major Holmes' enterprises and states that 35 had been drilled. He also described the bitumen deposit south of Jebel Dukhan and the pits which had been dug there. These exist today and can still be seen. Rhoades recommended that the option on the Bahrain concession of the Eastern & General Syndicate Limited, which consisted of 100,000 acres to be chosen, should be exercised and the rights there to acquired by his company.

But all was not plain sailing. Difficulties appeared because of the commitments involved in Gulf becoming a member of the Near East Development Corporation, a group of American oil interests in the Turkish Petroleum Company. These difficulties evolved from the Red Line Agreement under which all participants undertook not to act individually, directly or indirectly, in the "production or manufacture of crude oil" within an area which included a large part of the Ottoman Empire. The Red Line was a line marked on a map and included Bahrain.

Gulf was therefore faced with the dilemma of either relinquishing its interest in the Iraq concessions to retain its option in Bahrain or surrendering its Bahrain option to maintain its position with the Near East Development Corporation. The outcome was that Gulf attempted to find another American oil company to take its Bahrain option. In this it was successful and an agreement was executed with the Standard Oil Company of California on 27th December 1928 to take over all its Bahrain interests. Still there were problems to overcome due to the insistence that only a British company would be permitted to operate in Bahrain. This was eventually resolved in 1929 by the Standard Oil Company of California forming a wholly owned subsidiary under the laws of Canada and named The Bahrain Petroleum Company Limited. The first two representatives of the new company to arrive were F.A. Davies and W.F. Taylor who left San Francisco in March 1930 and travelled via New York, London, Paris, Venice Istanbul, Kirkuk, Baghdad and Basra. They were met in Basra by Thomas Simon and in Bahrain by Major Holmes.

In his report P.A. Davies recommended the drilling of a test well near Jebel Dukhan and, before he left, he marked the site with a cairn of stones surmounted by a flag.

On 1st August 1930 the Eastern & General Syndicate formally assigned its rights to BAPCO and so at last the scene was set for the entry of an oil company into Bahrain.

But on 3rd December the British Foreign Office notified the Eastern & General Syndicate that no further concessions, in addition to the original 100,000 acres would be granted and finally BAPCO obtained a Mining Lease, dated 29th December 1934, for this area which covered most of the island except for marginal strips along the coast.

Later the Mining Lease was extended "to the whole of the Shaikh's present and future dominions" by a Deed of Further Modification dated 19th June 1940.

CHAPTER II

EARLY DAYS

On his arrival on that morning of the 23rd May 1931, one of Mr. Skinner's first thoughts was of the cairn of stones which marked the site of the well he had come to drill. He found it at the foot of Jebel Dukhan where it had been built by F.A. Davies the previous year. The cairn has now, of course, gone but in its place stands a monument with a plaque to commemorate the discovery of oil in Bahrain. To accommodate the first arrivals and other men who were to come later, a small camp was planned. An area, little more than a stone's throw away to the north of the well site, was chosen and it remained the centre of operations until some years later when the New Camp, or Awali as it is now known, was built. Even so the original Jebel Camp has survived as a "field headquarters" for the Production and Drilling Departments and is still used today. Over the years, however, the buildings have been demolished, one by one, and others have taken their place; and now the only reminders of those early days are the shell of a bunkhouse and the remains of the transport dispatcher's hut.

In the meantime, whilst they were constructing their own camp, the men who had arrived found quarters in Manama and travelled backwards and forwards every day. The house in which they lived still survives facing the Service Station in Shaikh Hamad Road and for some years after everyone had moved to Jebel Camp it was still retained by the Company as a rest house for those spending their off-days in Manama.

The first weeks were busy ones. There was much to do before drilling could commence. A great deal of equipment had already arrived by sea and lay waiting on the Custom's Pier in Manama where it had been unloaded but it was still more than 15 miles away from the place where it was needed. Labour was recruited, trucks hired and hauling began.

Bahrain thirty-four years ago was quite a different place from what it is today. Oiled or paved roads did not exist and the villages were joined together by desert tracks or by trodden ways through the date gardens. The centre of the island, dominated by the mass of Jebel Dukhan, was an open, deserted plain. To the northeast of this empty area and

Outlined above the rim rock stood East Rifa'a, the largest centre of population to which the desert tracks converged like the spokes of a wheel. From Manama a track curved through the date gardens, past the Mosque at Khamis, to Kawari along, much the same line as the road follows today. From Kawari, later known as Wiggly Bridge after the Company had built a culvert there, the track wound up the desert slope to West Rifa'a, a much smaller place than now, descended the rim rock to Safrah and continued on to the Ruler's Palace at Sakhir and on again to the hunting lodges further south. This was the track which approached closest to the site of the new well and along it all the material was moved.

Meanwhile, the digging of the cellar for the new well was begun and when more men arrived on the 18th August the building of the rig commenced. This was finished by the 1st October and twelve days later rigging up was complete.

All was now ready and the well was spudded-in, using cable tools, at 11 a.m. on the 16th October. For the men it was a day like any other except for the presence of a group of distinguished visitors who had come, to look on. There was little in the way of a ceremony but all gathered around whilst a bottle of champagne was broken on the drilling bit to bring it good luck.

Drilling had commenced.

For the first seven days only a daylight shift was worked and then a change was made and drilling continued round the clock. The first 1,000 ft. was completed in sixty-one days and on New Year's Day 1932 the depth was 1,219 ft. Day by day the whole was driven deeper until on the 1st June 1932 oil began to flow - the first to be discovered in the Arabian Gulf area.

The venture which had brought the men and their equipment half way around the world was a success but there was no fanfare of trumpets. With the usual reticence of oilmen, the fact was accepted with satisfaction but with guarded enthusiasm. One oil well does not make an oilfield.

However, the occasion did not pass without a celebration, if elsewhere and for a different reason. On the evening that oil first started to show and excitement was rising, the camp was almost deserted. All those who could be spared were in the little Mission Church in Manama. That evening one of Mr. Skinner's three companions, who had arrived the year before, was married to a lady doctor of the American Mission. He had come to Bahrain to discover oil and had found a bride.

The completion of Well No. 1 and the discovery of oil was followed immediately by a further drilling programme. On the 20th August 1932 a second well was spudded in and completed in January 1933 and, by the end of 1934, thirteen wells were producing.

Meanwhile, the work of constructing the camp had continued and as soon as accommodation was ready the men left Manama and went to live at Jebel. As this was an exploration camp pure and simple and, from necessity, required in a hurry, permanency was not one of the factors considered. The first living quarters were nissen huts, and similar structures were used as a messhall and a recreation room. Later, as a protection from the heat, they were insulated by plastering the outside with a thick coat of mud. For this, a mixture of Rifa'a clay and chopped straw was used, mixed and paddled by human feet in a shallow basin. This was the material used locally for roofing houses and later when Awali was built this same mixture was used to cover buildings. These eight nissen huts served their purpose well and for years to come, after the Jebel Camp was abandoned, they remained in service as storage sheds in other parts of the Company's operations.

Other buildings and facilities, too, were added including a dispensary, garage, tool house and power plant. Later an office was built which, when no longer required as such, continued in use almost to the present day, first as a bunkhouse and then for many years as a field office for the Production Department. It was demolished in 1964 when a new production office was built on the same site.

The first milestone in the history of Jebel Camp was without doubt the discovery of oil. The second was perhaps the arrival of women. The first wife to come was Mrs. Skinner and she was soon followed by others. To provide quarters for these families the nissen huts were evacuated and a bunkhouse built for the bachelors. In the design of this building a new type of construction was decided upon. It was built from local materials using masonry, farrush and gutch and was completed with a wide, fly- screened verandah around it. Later in Awali this same type of construction was used for both the first family and bachelor houses. The old bunkhouse can still be seen at Jebel today where it is used as a core storage building.

When it was certain that oil had been discovered in commercial quantities, plans were made for the construction of facilities to export it. For this a deepwater harbour and an anchorage for sea-going tankers was required. The choice was, however, limited because of the shoals and shallow water around the coasts of Bahrain, and Sitra was selected. Here six to eight fathoms existed a little over three miles from the shore with access to the open sea. On land, the nearest place to this deepwater was the east coast of Sitra Island, itself accessible only by fords across the channel which divided it from the mainland. Before oil could be delivered to a ship it would be necessary therefore to build roads and a bridge and, in addition, pipelines, pumps and tanks would be required.

A task of this magnitude was far beyond the capabilities of any force which existed in Bahrain and the only alternative was to bring everything in from outside. A novel plan was adopted and in San Francisco the California Standard oil tanker, the EL SEGUNDO, was loaded with men and materials and all else, which would be required. With her cargo completed she set sail in December 1933 and fifty days later arrived at Bahrain.

For the next three and a half months she lay at anchor off Sitra and served as a dormitory, storehouse and construction centre whilst the men aboard her laid a pipeline to deepwater, built three storage tanks and a pumphouse at Sitra and drove the piles of the bridge to carry the road across to the island. From this small beginning has grown the modern port and shipping facilities at Sitra. Over the years the original work has been absorbed as extension followed extension and eventually even the bridge was demolished to make way for another. By night and day for twenty-five years, cars and trucks rolled over its deck in single line until, in the late fifties, a culvert wide enough to take a double line of traffic was built in its place.

Apart from the first facilities for shipping oil, the men of the EL SEGUNDO left another monument to their stay in Bahrain by building the Sitra Pier. From the deep water giving access to the open sea and the entrance to Khor Khaliya a narrow channel curves westwards, through the shallows, to the shore at Sitra and south again along the shore of Bahrain. Through this channel local craft have passed to and fro from time immemorial and where it approached the shore the Sitra

Old Pier - as it is now called - was built out to meet it. Few structures, have served the Company better than this simple rock-built pier. For ten years the Sitra Channel remained the only means of access from ship to shore and through it countless tons of cargo were barged from freighters in the anchorage were unloaded the stores, the commissaries, the materials and the innumerable articles required to maintain operations and to build new ones. All were landed at the Sitra Old Pier. Here with the help of a twenty-ton crane the barges were unloaded and trucks despatched around the clock. So it continued until the end of the war when the building of the causeway opened up a new chapter in the history of the marine facilities at Sitra, and brought to an end the era of the Sitra Pier. The crane and dispatchers office are no more but the pier is maintained and retains its usefulness when the need arises.

It is doubtful that many construction programmes can claim to have ended with such a finale, as did that begun by the EL SEGUNDO. When all was finished it was decided there should be a celebration and what better place could there be than the top of one of the tanks she had built.

In preparation, the floating roof of the tank was lowered a foot or two, a sheep was roasted and steaks barbecued. Everyone was invited and many joined in for no other reason than that they had come to see what was going on. That the party was a success can be judged from the fact that during the proceedings it was thought advisable, as a safety precaution, to lower the roof still more so that those on top ran a smaller risk of falling off.

But the EL SEGITNDO had not yet fulfilled her assignment. On 6th June 1934 she began loading crude and sailed away with the first oil to be exported from Bahrain.

In the meantime, whilst the men of the EL SEGUNDO were constructing the marine facilities for shipping oil, the work of proving a gathering system in the field was under way. This had been authorised in November 1933 when it had been deemed "imperative to ship 5,000 barrels of oil daily by the 1st of July 1934". This original gathering system consisted of a six-inch pipeline from Well No. 1 to Well No. 2 and continuing with an eight-inch line to gathering station No. 1, with laterals from other wells tied into the main line en route. At the gathering station the oil was to be degassed and pumped through an eight-inch line to the storage tanks at Sitra, which were being built to receive it.

At the same time a small topping plant was erected near gathering station No. 1 to supply gasoline for Company equipment. It was put into operation on 20th March 1934 and had a daily capacity of about 1,500 gallons with a recovery of about 20 % the fuel oil residue being mixed with crude or used on roads. In July 1935 additional cooling oils were installed which increased its capacity to approximately 1,700 gallons a day. The octane rating of the gasoline, however, was low and the plant was finally shut down early in 1936 when the distillation plant of the new refinery was complete.

Meanwhile, other far-reaching decisions had been made which included the building of a permanent camp and the construction of a refinery.

Already the number of employees had outgrown the Jebel Camp, and Mr Skinner and a number of other men and their wives had gone to live in Manama. As a drilling camp it had been convenient and adequate but now something more permanent was required.

The site chosen was a small hill rising from the plain known as Mughaidrat - the Place of Little Dust Storms - three and a half miles to the north. In this location the centre of population would be mid-way between the oil field and the site further east where the refinery would be built. The proposed layout of the camp was a simple one with the living quarters built on the high ground and the office and industrial areas located below. During its construction it was natural that it should be referred to as the "New Camp" and so it was called for a number of years until it was officially renamed Awali which can be translated to mean the "uplands" or "high places".

In 1934 a start was made by building Bunkhouses 1, 2, 3 and 4 later to be renamed Bachelor Quarters and re-numbered 43, 44, 45 and 46. Subsequently internal alterations were made to them all. And eventually No. 43 was demolished to make room for the new dining hall; No. 44 was converted into the present barber's shop and Nos. 45 and 46 remain as living quarters for bachelors as originally intended.

The Programme continued with the erection of four family houses built facing the west towards Zellaq and were numbered 1, 2, 3 and 4. These too have been subjected to many alterations. No. 1 is now the Thrift Shop, No. 2 was demolished in 1964 and Nos. 3 and 4 remain as family houses.

Next came the messhall with servants quarters built in two lines behind it. This was the first building erected by the Company, which contained a room of any size, and immediately it was realized that it provided opportunities for dancing. Every week or so the floor was polished, the chairs and tables pushed back and here, with these simple arrangements - it can be said the social life of Awali began. Nothing of the original buildings now remains. The first of the servants' quarters were removed to make space for the double storey bachelor quarters and later the remainder were pulled down, whilst the messhall itself was demolished, when no longer needed, after the new dining hall was built. The site is now a cir park adjacent to the club.

Meanwhile the foundations of the club had been laid and from them grew a building that, with many alterations and modifications, was to remain the focal point of community life for twenty-five years, until in fact it was destroyed by fire in 1959. Of the distinctive features in the new club, the two most noticeable were perhaps the polished hardwood floor and the gas-fired logs in the fireplace. The former was the first and, for some time to come, the only wooden floor in Awali. In later years a controversy raged in high places over the question of wooden versus concrete floors, it being contended that wooden floors were neither practical nor economic in Bahrain. In 1936 a hardwood floor was approved for the new auditorium but not for the hospital or family houses built at the same time. However, in 1943, wooden floors were declared acceptable for the construction of the double storey bachelor houses but soon afterwards the decision was again reversed. Later they were approved once more and eventually became standard for all new living quarters.

The building went on, and one by one, family houses and bachelor quarters were erected until at the beginning of 1937 when the New Camp was completed there were twenty-seven two- bedroom, and four three-bedroom family houses, and four six- bedroom, nine five-bedroom and four four-bedroom bachelor houses on the hill. Of them all two have been demolished and the remainder have been occupied ever since.

The method of construction followed that employed in the bunkhouse at Jebel Camp and the minimum of imported materials were used. The walls consisted of columns of local stone, filled in between with panels of farrush and the whole plastered with gutch. For the roofs, wooden joists were used covered with boarding and finally with a layer of local mud. Some time later, to differentiate between these original houses and others which were built, the name "Gutch Houses" was commonly used. Attempts have been made to call them Native Masonry Houses and other more appropriate names but Gutch Houses they became and Gutch Houses they will probably remain. Garages, for private use, were also provided in blocks of four and six at various locations around the camp. During the war these were appropriated to store foodstuffs and all have now gone. The present latticework, mat-covered shelters did not come until some fifteen years later and, as originally an individual was charged a small rent for their use, they were designed to be easily transportable from house to house.

Amenities were not forgotten. Tennis courts were provided behind the club and a nine-hole golf course laid out with the first tee located at the top of the bluff where Al Dar now stands. In the meantime the construction of the industrial area was proceeding. An office and commissary were completed. They were small, simple buildings designed to cater for the requirements as existed then. Both are still in use but many alterations and extensions have changed them to such an extent that they bear little resemblance to the originals of those early days.

To the east of the office a storehouse was erected and a drilling tool house, beyond again. The former is now the personal effects store and offices for the Employee Services Department; the latter was demolished in 1964. To the north of the storehouse a transport yard was laid out consisting of a dispatcher's office and service station, facing, the main office; two lines of car shelters enclosed the yard with a garage building at the eastern end. The latter is now the Awali Car Club premises and the Awali maintenance shops. The remainder were demolished when the present garage and transport compound were completed in 1958. To the east again were placed the machine shop and welding shop, and to the north a carpenter shop and electrical shop whilst the open area further east became a storage yard. Despite extensions and modifications these buildings eventually proved totally inadequate for expanding Company operations, and the industrial area in Awali virtually ceased to exist after such facilities were concentrated within the Refinery itself.

Although the place chosen for the new camp was no more than a barren rocky hill where nothing had ever grown before, it was soon decided it should not remain as such. A nursery, now known as the Company garden, was established to produce plants and seedlings, and a professional was recruited to experiment and determine which things would grow. But this was only half the battle as there were still many difficulties to overcome, not the least of which was the absence of soil and water. The problem of soil was solved by bringing in sweet earth from an area south-west of the present golf course and,

before long, hedges and gardens began to flourish. Lawns too were laid at many of the family houses and at islands in front of the messhall and club. The latter also included a fountain and was further adorned by two Portuguese cannons which proved too much of a temptation to those who pretended a knowledge of artillery. One night their firing, power was demonstrated by charging them with explosives and touching it off but a repetition of such reckless sport was easily prevented by filling the barrels with concrete.

With the houses and gardens came properly defined roads. This was a subject to which, in earlier days, it had not been necessary to devote much attention. To the well sites, roughly graded roads were all that had been required but soon the technique of oiling began. The growth of the new camp and the amount of traffic between it and Jebel, however, justified something better and the first "main road" was built. Later this was extended until eventually it reached Manama. Inside the camp these early roads were defined by rocks and in the local regulations, given to employees at the time, it was made a rule that "..... cars should be driven only on the oiled roads", a request which was pondered over by many until they arrived in Bahrain and saw what an oiled road really was. Some years later, in 1941, a programme of building properly aligned curbs and sidewalks was begun.

At Jebel it had never been considered necessary to enclose the camp but at New Camp it was decided to erect a perimeter fence. Three exits were planned; one on the road to Jebel, one on the Sitra Road and the third on the road leading to Manama. The Jebel Gate (later known as the Zellaq Gate) was located at the bottom of the bluff, below the present site of Al Dar and from it the fence was erected south, along the side of the road and then east behind house No. 4 to a point near the rifle range. Here it turned north again along the line of the present fence, behind the stables, to the Sitra Gate, located near the transport compound. From there it continued north again to-a-point near the Pay lanes and then west to Manama Gate situated near the present North Cafeteria and then south again to the Jebel Gate.

So New Camp was built, enclosed and occupied but the Jebel Camp was not yet abandoned. For several years to come it was still used to accommodate bachelors who could not be housed in Awali and was finally vacated at the end of 1937.

Since it was first built Awali has been extended many times; one expansion programme following another as the population grew. Much of the original, however, remains although many of the individual buildings have been altered and enlarged and the industrial area has been dispersed. A few buildings also, like the dining hall and club, have been demolished and replaced by others of more modern design.

Externally, the old Gutch houses themselves are little changed except that all have been painted and the trees and greenery, growing up over the years, have added much to their surroundings. No longer are they the stark, white houses, which once rose from the equally colourless, barren ground. Built before the days of air-cooling they were designed with windows on every side opening on to a wide verandah and each room was fitted with a ceiling fan. In the family houses all this has now been changed, the central hallway has, in most cases, been converted into a closet and many of the windows filled in.

The club too was a "gutch building" surrounded by the, same wide, screened verandah. It also was extended and altered so that eventually the interior, at least, had little resemblance to that originally built. The original building was small and simple, consisting of a lounge with a wing for a library and reading room and another which matched it at the other end for a small billiards room with space for one table. No separate bar was included and drinks were passed to those in the lounge through a long serving hatch in the wall. It soon became apparent, however, that more space was needed and in 1937 a larger billiards room was added and the original one converted into a bar. As time went on space continued to be a problem and one verandah after another was closed in and incorporated into the building. In 1950 the library was moved to the school and the room it occupied converted into a reading room with a sliding partition dividing it from the lounge but never, it seemed, even from the earliest days was the building large enough.

In consequence the area behind the club was developed to provide seating space outside. At first seashells were put down and then a few years later it was paved with colour-crete and special furniture provided. The era of the Club Terrace had begun. Later still a terraxo dance floor was laid and in 1949 the area was extended to an upper terrace, made by building a retaining wall against the bank on the southern side.

From earliest time until the day when the club was destroyed by fire, the terrace was to remain the undisputed centre of club life. To it, except in the coldest of weather, everyone made their way to sit under the coloured lights strung overhead and drink their beer, enjoy a curry or savour their wine. However, as if by common consent, the bachelors always congregated on the north side and the women and their escorts on the other. It is impossible to say how this routine grew up but no matter what was done no one was able to change it.

Over the years much took place on the Club Terrace. Two Kings of Arabia have been entertained there - King 'Abd al-Aziz Al Saud in 1939 and his son King Saud in 1954. It was there also that Churchill's wartime speeches were listened to. It saw revelry, dances, fetes, barbeques and casino nights and, for a while, even a boxing ring stood there. Well-meaning people on several occasions tried to change its name. The word 'patio' they thought might sound more dignified but it began by being called the 'Club Terrace' and by that name it will always be remembered.

The messhall was another gutch building, which from a small beginning was enlarged many times. In this instance, however, a change of name came easily and in later years it became known as the dining hall. The original building consisted of a dining room, with a row of pipe columns down the middle, the usual screened verandah and a kitchen at the rear. The first change came when the verandah at the north end was enclosed and furnished as a small private dining room where bachelors could entertain. Known is the 'Blue Room', although in fact it was painted white, it was the scene of many hilarious parties. As a room it had little to commend it, being long and narrow and the backs of the chairs, grouped around the table, practically touched the walls but many a man leaving Bahrain or going home on leave had occasion to remember the farewell he had been given in that simple, narrow room.

Eventually the Blue Room was demolished to make way for another also with little reason, called by the same name. In 1942, however it was floored with polished green tiles and then became more appropriately the "Green Room". This was a larger room, divided into two by folding Teak wood doors and with similar access to the main dining room itself. This room, like its predecessor, could be reserved for private parties but was much more spacious and convenient. It was possible to serve cocktails in one half whilst the tables were being laid for dinner in the other and conversely dancing could begin without a view of the dirty dishes being cleared away.

During the war the dining room itself was extended to the south to provide space for the several hundred construction men who began to arrive in 1943. After they had gone the extension was shut away and for several years remained unused. In 1947, however, a very different use was found for it. It was then converted into an engineering office that remained there until a new wing was added to the Main Office in 1950.

With the building of the new dining hall and coffee bar in 1957 the old messhall became more or less an empty shell but its life or at least for a part of it, was not yet over. When the club was destroyed by fire in 1959 the extension, once used as the engineering office, was immediately converted and became the first Phoenix Bar. As such it continued until the opening of the new club made it superfluous and the whole building was razed to the ground.

Of all the buildings in Awali perhaps none has changed as much as the commissary. Over the years it had been re-designed, enlarged and altered to take care of the increasing population and more modern methods of food preservation. In the early days practically all imported foods, apart from meat, were in tins and the commissary was essentially a dry goods store. Frozen vegetables and the like were unknown and except for bringal and "ladies' fingers" little was available locally. It began therefore in a simple way with a counter and a space for stacked shelves in the background. Over this counter the shopping lists were called or passed and the items collected by the counterman. In those early days, before the present cash system came into being, purchases were charged to the employee's personal account, a practice which often gave rise to certain apprehension when statements were opened at the end of the month. This was particularly so during the war years when small shipments of "luxuries" occasionally arrived and were put on sale before their prices were known. The retail section was re-modelled and converted into a self-service store in 1951.

Like others of the early buildings the main office has remained in constant use for over thirty years although it now bears little resemblance to its former self. It began as a single storey building facing the commissary and its outline can still be traced by a close examination of its hallways and columns, It too was a gutch building enclosed by a wide screened verandah with ceiling fans in every room. Since those early days the extensions and alterations made to it have been too many to record and there are now probably no more than three rooms that remain as originally built.

The first enlargement came in 1936 when a second storey was added but soon the lack of space again became acute and in 1938 a bunkhouse was moved bodily and set up as annex outside the north door where it remained for several years. Next verandahs were enclosed and one by one they have been incorporated into the buildings; rooms have been divided or two or three thrown into one to make the most of every square foot of space but still demands could not be met. Finally, in 1950 a new independent wing was added but even this has proved inadequate for expanding operations. Resort has therefore been made to outside buildings and over the years, bunkhouses, the old storehouse building, part of the commissary and even family houses have been used as office space.

In addition to its normal use, the main office also included to facilities that brought every Awali resident to its door. The first was a cash withdrawal window opening to the verandah overlooking the commissary and here it remained for many years, until the present mail office was opened in 1960. Also included in the original design was a small room, with a counter, immediately inside the front door where letters could be received and posted. 'Buses taking the construction men and others to the refinery always made this stop on the way and it became the recognised duty of a person in the front seat to collect mail from his fellow passengers and post it. In the evening such an orderly procedure was not followed and there was a concerted rush to the counter where a clerk did his best to satisfy the clamouring throng by searching for and distributing mail from the rows of pigeonholes behind him. In 1938 a separate post office was built as an annex to the northeast corner of the building and here individual mailboxes were installed. Later it moved again into a separate building, now the telephone exchange, and here it remained from 1944 until the present mail office was completed.

At the same time as the as the new camp was being built, work in the field continued. More wells were drilled and the gathering system begun in 1934 was extended. This, anticipating the future, was designed for a capacity of 30,000 barrels of oil per day with closer well spacing and deeper pays in mind.

The new system was begun in 1935 and consisted of five gathering stations to which the oil flowed through common flow lines and, after passing through a gas separator, was stored in 2,000 bbl. cone roof tanks to be gauged. From the tanks the oil was pumped direct to Sitra or the refinery. This enlarged system was completed in June 1936 when the first crude was run to the new refinery and on the third of the month the operation of the Sitra Loading Terminal which had until then been a function of the Producing Department was taken over by the refinery.

Meanwhile, a new chapter in the history of Bahrain had commenced. On the east coast on a plateau named Jebel Hisai a refinery was built. Although impressive enough at the time it consisted of no more than one crude distillation unit with a throughput of 10,000 barrels per day together with a PbS plant, power house and SO₂ plant, but from that small beginning has grown the huge complex there today.

With a refinery established there were finished products to ship. Pipelines were laid to the tanks at Sitra and submarine lines onwards to the deep water of the anchorage. Here the single mooring that had been laid for the shipping of crude was no longer adequate and an island wharf was constructed to take its place. This was a piled structure that consisted of two berths and a laboratory for cargo testing. From this isolated structure, approachable only by boat, millions of barrels of oil were shipped until in 1961 it was demolished and the modern Wharf No. 1 built in its place.

Another construction programme was begun in 1936 that increased the refinery capacity to 25,000 barrels per day. This was completed in 1937 and included a second crude distillation unit, two thermal cracking plants, a reformer and acid manufacturing and treating plants.

With the building of a refinery the life in Awali began to change from that of a drilling camp to something more permanent but two or three years were to elapse before the change was complete. In the meantime, construction men crowded everywhere. To accommodate them the Jebel Camp was filled to capacity and the empty office used as temporary living quarters. In Awali bunkhouses 49 to 60 were built and even tents erected.

For a while, however, local regulations and conditions remained the same. Employees were told that the sun was dangerous and those exposed to it should wear toupees at all times from March until November and that these could be purchased in Bahrain or in Baghdad en route. They there also advised not to drink unboiled water nor eat uncooked foods, as such practice was dangerous. New employees before beginning their journeys, were also warned not to drink the water supplied on European trains and were given an allowance to buy bottled water instead. Quinine, it was stated, should be taken if bitten by mosquitoes.

Six annual holidays were observed at Christmas, Fourth of July, the Kings Birthday (23rd June), and "the three Mohammodan Ids. following, Muharram, Ramadhan and the Haj". Other than Christmas, the Fourth of July was the holiday celebrated with the most enthusiasm. This was a legacy from the days when the majority of employees were American but Britishers when they arrived entered into the spirit of it with equal readiness.

Different hours were worked during summer and winter months and the whistle blown accordingly.

Winter Schedule (September - May)

	New Camp	Old Camp
Arising	6.00 a.m.	5.45 a.m.
Preparatory	6.45 a.m.	6.30 a.m.
Start Work	7.00 a.m.	7.00 a.m.
Stop Work	11.30 a.m.	11.30 a.m.
Resume Work	12.30 p.m.	12.30 p.m.
Stop Work	4.00 p.m.	4.00 p.m.
Dinner	6.00 p.m.	6.00 p.m.

Summer Schedule (5th June - 15th September)

Arising	4.30 a.m.	5.45 a.m.
Preparatory	5.15 a.m.	5.00 a.m.
Start Work	5.30 a.m.	5.30 a.m.
Light Lunch	10.00 a.m.	10.00 a.m.
Resume Work	10.30 a.m.	10.30 a.m.
Stop Work	1.00 p.m.	1.00 p.m.

The bar remained open throughout the day from 9.00 a.m. until 10.00 p.m. but strict regulations were in force to control behaviour. Bachelors were not allowed drinks in their quarters and employees were all warned that drunkenness; fighting or any kind of misconduct would be cause for dismissal. For wilful damage to club furniture, fixtures, fittings or facilities an employee was liable to a charge of eight times its value.

At last, however, this transition period cone to an end and in the late thirties a near era began.

CHAPTER III

T H E L A T E T H I R T I E S

With coming of the year 1937 it was apparent that it required but a little time before the change became complete. It was true that both camps were still crowded with men working on the refinery construction programme but it seemed certain that once this was over a more stable organisation and settled community would be established. The emphasis too was shifting and in both high and low places the word "Refinery" was heard more and more in conversation.

One by one the changes came and a different type of employee was recruited to meet the new pattern of operations. Within a year young men from the U.K., complete strangers to the oil world, arrived to fill positions as accountants, trainee operators and other ancillary jobs connected with the refinery. From the men in the construction force, who had come to Bahrain for a year, were chosen others willing to extend their tour and become permanent employees.

For a short while, however, the permanent, the temporary, the experienced and the inexperienced lived together, whilst the old order gave way to the new.

Some may have wished for the good old days when as a service the Company had stamped an employee's letters, paid his bills in Manama and settled his gambling debts and all he was concerned with was the debit on his statement at the end of the month but these days had gone, never to return.

With all its advantages the building of Awali had, however created a problem, which remained a very real one for a number of years. In the family houses the married people enjoyed a standard of living far higher than that of the single employees who lived, two to a room, in the original bachelor quarters and the construction bunkhouses. The disparity was very great and it was no wonder therefore that the bachelors thought of the club almost as their private preserve. In fact, for a year or so it remained their stronghold and a place to which women never went except on special occasions.

Perhaps in those days the men were more spirited and less abstemious in their leisure hours and the entire club, having no separate bar, had become a place where the nightly scene was one of drinking bouts and uproarious behaviour. Into this male world the females, always escorted and vastly outnumbered, ventured only to the infrequent dances and weekly film show. For the latter a screen was lowered and the chairs arranged in the lounge. The men not interested were isolated on the verandah where they were kept busy handing drinks through the windows to those inside.

Gradually, however, the club settled down to a more tranquil existence brought about not only by the departure of the construction men but also by the fact that the bachelors were allowed liquor in their quarters. In the early days this had been a privilege of families who had been allowed to buy "by the bottle and case" from the commissary, whereas the single man's drinking had been confined to the club. Soon too the bar hours were changed. Instead of being open from 9.00 a.m. until 10.00 p.m. they were restricted to a period in the morning and for four hours in the evening.

The time-honoured system of not requiring actual cash to pay for drinks, however, did not change. In the early days at Jebel a book had been placed in the bar and a person was entitled to help himself by signing his name. For reasons best not named this procedure was later discontinued and the privilege was never available in New Camp. Instead a chit system had been introduced consisting of a book of coupons, of different colours for different denominations, and costing Rs.10/- each. For each drink the requisite number of coupons were torn out or, more usually, the book was handed to the barman to help himself. The system had a number of disadvantages, not the least of which was the tendency for people not to search their pockets and send half depleted books to the laundry.

The coupon system remained until 1st April 1942 when the signing of white chits took its place. This had much to commend it. The chits were carried by the waiters and when completed provided them with a written list of what was required. Its one great defect, however, soon became evident. On Thursday nights particularly it seemed a number of biblical characters, whose signatures were never legible, made a habit of visiting the club. Also the General Manager apparently spent much of his time there incognito, although in person he was seldom seen! The white chit system continued until July 1949 when all transactions were placed on a cash basis.

By the middle 1937 air travel had become the normal means by which employees arrived in Bahrain. Previously, from London, most had come by the overland route from Calais to Basra via Paris, Milan, Istanbul and Baghdad with the section from Tel Kotchek to Kirkuk by road. From Basra the last leg of the journey was completed by the Imperial Airways land 'plane, the HANNIBAL, or by a B.I. steamer. Most Americans from the west coast of the United States travelled by sea from San Francisco via Kobe, Manila, Singapore and Colombo; the journey taking sixty days.

By the overland route the journey had taken nine to fourteen days but by the Imperial Airways Empire Flying Boats the time was reduced to two and a half days with two night stops on the way. A disadvantage of air travel, however, was the limited amount of luggage, which could be carried especially if the passenger himself was a heavy individual. The allowance was 100 kilos which included the passenger's own weight with a maximum of 15 kilos if he, himself, weighed over 85 kilos.

Even before the new camp was finished it was apparent further houses would be required for the increased work force made necessary by the enlarged refinery. It was then that a significant decision was made which was to change the whole way of life in Awali. In 1935 when plans had been made for a General Manager's house in Manama, the possibility of air-cooling living quarters in Bahrain had been considered. This project was abandoned but in 1937 with the completion of the next housing programme it became a reality.

Unlike the old gutch houses those now proposed were not designed locally and it seemed that those who worked on the drawing board decided that what had gone before should be dismissed and forgotten. There was still space on the hill where additional houses could be built but this was rejected and a site chosen half a mile to the north. Here, thirty-three new houses, numbered 101 - 132 and 133 and 136, were erected in neat rows of four, each precisely spaced and looking like its neighbour. For a number of years until that part of Awali was extended again, this group of houses, known as the "A.C.

Camp", remained a separate entity and in conversation Awali became divided into the Upper Camp and Lower Camp.

The houses being designed specifically with air-cooling in mind naturally differed entirely from the older gutch houses with their loftier, spacious rooms and wide verandahs. Another break was made with the past and the materials for their construction were brought in from outside. The result was more modern kitchens, better finishing and a house more easily to keep clean.

Another innovation, which looked startling at the time, were the pitched roofs, probably the first to be seen in Bahrain. The difference of opinion over the shape of a roof, which has continued over the years, may not be reconciled yet. In the next housing programme the roofs were flat and then they became sloping again, and throughout the camp can be seen many examples of each kind.

The relative merits of the small, compact, air-cooled house and the old gutch houses have been argued over since. This may seem a parochial affair of little moment to the outside world but there is no doubt that the Company, when building these first small compact, air-cooled houses, nearly thirty years ago, pioneered a type of house which was to be copied later, not only in Bahrain but throughout the Middle East.

The extension of Awali to the "lower camp" included other facilities that had been long-felt wants. The club had been enlarged to include a billiards room, which, in turn, made space available for a bar and a separate lounge, but there was still no cinema or a place available for a large gathering away from its boisterous atmosphere. The decision was therefore made to build an air-conditioned auditorium that soon became known as the theatre. It was included as the prominent feature of the new area and stood on the site now occupied by the school.

The building was designed with a level floor and a cinema screen and a stage, together with two small dressing rooms at one end. At the other was a small raised balcony and a projection room behind.

The seats were steel, cushion less and armless folding chairs, easy to remove and store perhaps but not very comfortable for sitting on. However, the balcony at the back was provided with three rows of bamboo-made armchairs and settees, complete with cushions where, before each film showing, those who had the time staked a claim early.

With the completion of the new building the boisterous but much enjoyed film shows in the club came to an end. New activities began. There was an immediate interest in amateur dramatics, a badminton section was formed and ladies keep fit classes were held. One of the justifications for building the theatre was the possibility of holding dancing without closing off part of the club which, although not absolutely necessary, was thought desirable and which had called forth stormy criticism. A few took place but they were not a success. It had been early established as a rule that no drinks would be permitted in the new theatre and, for most this seemed a hardship that could not be borne. Bottles were left in cars and those who lived nearby at once found their circle of friends greatly enlarged, but it was a situation that left much to be desired and dances reverted to the club.

Associated with the new theatre, although quite a separate subject was the school. The history of the school, as far as Awali residents are concerned, began on the 8th September 1936 when a meeting of twelve employees was called at the instigation of the General Manager "to discuss the possibilities of organising a school in Awali". Two classrooms were included in the design of the theatre as a wing extending to the north of the projection box and were completed at the end of 1937. After some difficulty a schoolmistress was recruited in London who was to become a familiar figure riding through Awali on her bicycle. These first two rooms are now used as the teachers' common room and the head-master's study.

In February 1938 it was reported there were twenty-seven pupils and that thirty or forty more were expected over the next two years and, in consequence, an extension to the building would be required. In fact, an additional classroom was built later in the year and the daughter of an employee was engaged, on a casual basis, as an assistant schoolmistress.

The early interest shown by parents in the new school was continued later. On the 11th July 1938 a meeting was held in House 3 at the invitation of the management at which five parents were elected, together with the schoolmistress as an ex-officio member, to a School Board. Its functions, it was stated, were "to assist parents and the school principal by formulating suggestions for after school and recreational facilities of all children resident in Awali, with regard to facilities available and the unusual environment in which they were placed".

So the theatre and the school continued, side by side, as one building until a disastrous fire occurred on 24th December 1943. The next morning the theatre lay in ashes but the school wing had been saved.

It was wartime so little could be done but it was realised immediately that probably the most popular form of entertainment had been lost. Within a few days an open-air cinema had been constructed on a site adjacent to the old and a little to the south of it. No time was wasted on anything but essentials and the result was a bare plot of ground with a screen housed behind double doors at one end and an elevated projection room, built of corrugated asbestos sheets, at the other. Later the ground was graded and the "bleachers" from the soccer ground set up at the back. For seating the chairs salvaged from the theatre were used and a certain number of benches were provided. A few people began the practice of driving in their cars and parking them at the back but these were discouraged. Most, however, found it more convenient to take their own folding canvas chairs and this soon became the custom.

From time to time suggestions were made that sidewalls should be erected against the weather but nothing came of them. In the winter months, therefore, individuals took along their own protection in the form of hats, scarves, overcoats and blankets and any other means they could think of to keep out the cold.

It was not long before the stage of the old theatre was missed no less than the screen and plans were made for erecting a temporary one. The logical plan was to build behind the cinema screen and this was done. Using the structure that housed the screen as the back wall two dressing rooms were built with a stage looking in the opposite direction to the west. On the assumption perhaps that it was difficult for an actor to throw his voice into miles of open air or maybe because it was desirable to limit the audience, the area in front of the stage - when a play was being performed - was surrounded by hanging tarpaulins. These served the purpose very well except on windy nights when the clacking and booming of canvas drowned practically every other sound.

The temporary outdoor stage and cinema lasted for nine years until 1952 when the new theatre was completed. However, whilst the new building was fully air-cooled, the alternative of open-air seating was not completely overlooked. It is interesting to note that in its design a removable panel for a future proscenium was included in the wall behind the stage, which could face an audience sitting in the open on the southern side. This provision for outdoor seating has never been developed.

Also included with the "A.C. Camp" schemes was a new air-cooled hospital, doctor's house and sisters' quarters.

In the early days a dispensary had been built at Jebel Camp and an Indian doctor lived there. For serious cases and those who required in-patient treatment the Company had relied upon the American Mission Hospital in Manama. During the construction of New Camp, House 14 had been set aside and became the first hospital. The facilities provided were simple. The living/ dining room partitioned to form an outpatients' department and the two bedrooms were used as wards. The kitchen was converted into a laboratory-cum-dispensary and the hallway was utilised as a waiting room. All meals were sent over from the dining hall. The medical staff consisted of an American doctor assisted by his wife who was also a doctor and, early in 1937; a matron and four British nursing sisters arrived.

The new hospital was opened on 30th June 1937 and contained facilities for in-patients and outpatients together with an operating theatre and laboratory. It has since been enlarged a number of times. In 1952 two new wings were added and the main entrance and outpatients section moved from the south to the western side. At the same time a dental suite was added. Later, in 1963, another wing was built to enable all Bapco patients to be cared for in the one building.

Before the dental suite was provided in the hospital there was no dentist in Awali. This same problem had been discussed in the very early days and in 1933 it was recorded "There has never been a permanent dentist in Bahrain. An American who has been in these parts for a great number of years makes an occasional visit but these are irregular and uncertain". This dentist, who had a practice in Basra, apparently left it occasionally to make a tour through the Gulf area but in August 1936 he agreed to live permanently in Bahrain when he was installed in Manama by the Company who guaranteed him a monthly income. A house was leased for him opposite the American Mission Church and certain modern equipment provided. He stayed until his retirement in May 1943 when he was succeeded by a Syrian dentist who was retained until the Company's own dentist arrived at the end of 1951.

Within a year of the "A.C. Camp" being completed another housing programme was under way. This included the eight, four-bedroom bachelor houses numbered 210 - 217. These were the first air-cooled houses to be built for bachelors and were located at the bottom of the hill near the Zellaq gate, as then was, where they were within easy reach of the dining hall and club. In recent years all have been converted into family houses.

Later, in the same year, the construction of more air-cooled family houses began. For these the site chosen was, strangely enough, not the "A.C. Camp" but the area south of the old Gutch houses, where they were dispersed around the hill. To make this possible the road, which had ended at House 4, was extended in a circle to meet the existing road again near House 18. The houses first built were the duplex houses 300 A/B to 308 t/B but the programme was immediately extended to another ring road further south, and houses 317 A/B to 334 A/B were erected. So "A.C. Camp" remained a detached entity until some years after the war.

Following the building of the "A.C. Camp" all subsequent houses were designed for air-cooling and, to provide for those included in the recent programme, A.C. Plant No. 2 was built.

During the previous summer the bedrooms of certain of the family Gutch houses had been provided with floor type A.C. units and now a scheme was put in hand for air-cooling all family and bachelor quarters. Later this was extended to the dining hall, main office and other buildings in Awali.

At this time another improvement to camp facilities was made. Previously a system of septic tanks had been used for handling sewage but now this was abolished. In its place an enclosed sewage system was installed with a pumphouse and an outfall to the sea. From Awali a pipeline was laid across the golf course and through the open lands, south of the pitch ponds, to the coast where a location had been chosen for the outfall in Farsiyah Bay.

As the decade came to an end it seemed that at last a settled community had been established. The old Jebel Camp had been abandoned and the original New Camp extended to a permanent, air-cooled village. The pioneering days were over!

Meanwhile, across the water to the west, these days had barely begun. The Bahrain oilfield was the first to be discovered in the Arabian Gulf area but by the time the first few wells had been drilled, geologists of the California Arabian Standard Oil Company (CASOC) later to be changed to the Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO), were busy in the eastern province of Saudi Arabia. The first party had arrived in September 1933 and in 1935 drilling had commenced. By 1938 oil had been discovered in the Dammam Field and an agreement made to ship crude to Bahrain. A small shipping terminal was established at Al-Khobar and a similar one, as a receiving point, at Zellaq. Thus began the importation of oil from Saudi Arabia that has continued ever since.

The shelving, sandy beach, north of the village of Zellaq, had been "discovered" by employees in the very early days and, over the years, the name has perhaps been associated with bathing, boating and picnics rather than with its other uses. But this stretch of coast has served the Company in many other ways.

It was here in June 1931 that the first water well was drilled, a little to the east of the present compound. The results, however, were unsatisfactory and it was later abandoned. In July 1932 another site was chosen, this time in the northeast corner of the compound and, from the well, water was pumped to the tanks on the hill at Jebel. Later still, more wells were drilled and pipelines laid to Awali where the term "Zellaq water" is still a household word.

The first oil from Saudi Arabia was brought across in two barges, towed by the steam tug "ARAB" on 4th September 1938, and the last cargo, No. 4685, was handled through Zellaq on March, 1945. At that time the A-B pipeline had been completed and the facilities at Zellaq were dismantled.

To handle the early barge shipments, a floating dock, consisting of a barge equipped with a diesel engine and pump, was moored at Zellaq in a position slightly south of the present masonry island pier. From the barge the oil was discharged into four tanks ashore and then transported by pipeline to a juncture with the Bahrain Gathering System at Tank Battery No. 5 where it was commingled with the oil from the Bahrain Field and pumped to the refinery.

For a while this simple installation was all that was needed to cope with the oil received but later, when the amount increased, it became inadequate and additional facilities were required. In 1940 the masonry island jetty was built and pumps were installed, access to which was gained by a catwalk, long since gone, which landed on the beach in front of the present sailing club compound.

At the same time a battery of field boilers, pumps and other ancillary equipment were installed on shore by which the oil was pumped direct to the refinery. Later still the outer wharf was constructed from which a submarine pipe was laid.

As the construction men left and families arrived to occupy the houses in the A.C. Camp and the duplex area, the whole atmosphere of Awali changed. The club, freed from its domination by bachelors, was becoming the centre around which the many flourishing social and recreational activities revolved. In fact it was taking its rightful place as the focal point of the leisure life of the community.

Club facilities had begun in a simple way. At Jebel Camp nissen hut had been set aside for recreation and was no doubt all that had been required. It had provided a place where the few men had been able to meet, rest and drink their beer. When the New Camp had been built a clubhouse had been provided, soon to be enlarged, and later the terrace had been laid. In 1937 the construction of the swimming pool, the auditorium and cinema had added greatly to the amenities available.

Throughout this period of growth, the organisation of the club had been the subject of much talk and many discussions. The Company had provided the facilities but immediately the question arose as to their maintenance and the policy to be followed regarding profits and other revenues. Above all it was considered the members themselves should take a hand in the management and operation of the club.

In consequence, a committee had been formed in the early days and had for several years advised the management on club affairs. Soon the members' participation was extended when the Company made a monthly grant to the club and all recreational facilities became its financial responsibility. In September 1939 the cinema and the projection of films were also handed over, by the Company, to the club.

During this time the possibilities of a more formal arrangement were being considered and finally the draft of a constitution was drawn up.

In March 1940 a Special Meeting was called to elect a new committee and, at the same time, the proposed constitution was discussed. A few months later, in May, it was accepted in principle and put into operation. This meant in effect that, within certain limits, the employees became responsible for running their own club.

By terms of the constitution full membership was restricted to "staff" employees although provision was made for the election of certain other European residents in Manama as Honorary Members. It was also laid down that the management of the club would be vested in a committee to be elected each year by Chief Accountant attending committee meetings in an advisory capacity.

From its revenues the Committee was responsible for providing all services to members together with the maintenance and replacement of all furnishings and fittings, including interior, decoration of the club building, the auditorium and the swimming pool, whilst the Company would take care of the fabric of the buildings. In addition, the club was to undertake the operation, maintenance and replacement of the soda water plant located in the commissary. The existing recreational facilities were also made the responsibility of the club except for any roofs and walls, which the Company undertook to maintain. These recreational facilities were listed as: the football and hockey grounds; the cricket field and pavilion; the baseball diamond; the golf course; the tennis court; the squash court and the barbeque pit.

In addition, the club committee was made responsible for issuing byelaws and was also given the power to suspend or curtail the privileges of any member for behaviour that, in its opinion, was unbecoming.

In the Constitution it was clearly defined that there should be no entrance fee but a subscription might be decided upon a General Meeting. This was a matter that had been hotly debated and was to remain a bone of contention for many years to come.

Many maintained that, as the club's income was mainly derived from its liquor sales, those who drank, the most and took little interest in other forms of recreation were paying more than their fair share whilst the more athletic types, who seldom used the bar, were getting something for nothing. Through these members, and they were many, a strong case was put forward for making the sports sections self-supporting. But these arguments were countered by others who said the recreational facilities, which included the cinema, had been provided by the Company and if an individual chose to use them or not was immaterial. What, it was asked, would be the position of a man who wished to play one game of golf or one game of tennis a year or of a member who sat in the lounge every evening ordering nothing but glasses of water.

The task given to the committee was by no means an easy one but, on the whole, it was successful. The system, which had been the practice for many years, by which each sports section elected its own committee to manage its affairs but relying on the club for its finances, was not changed.

Early in 1942 the question of the Constitution again came to a head when a new one was drafted and a copy sent to all members of the club.

A stormy meeting followed at which the various factions loudly expressed their views. A group banded together to demand a reduction in the price of beer and the imposition of other dues to provide revenue. Proposals and counter proposals were shouted from the floor and wild suggestions were made that a monthly subscription of one hundred or even two hundred rupees a month should be imposed.

In April the Constitution was accepted and, apart from two major changes, it differed little from the previous one. It did, however, provide for a monthly levy that was fixed at Rupees five for each full member and, in addition, the Company agreed to provide a Club Supervisor.

It is also interesting to note the club was made responsible for further recreational facilities. These were billiards, darts, table-tennis, shooting range and the club terrace and library.

For the next few years the club continued to operate under the new Constitution until, at the end of 1944, another change occurred. By that time the Aviation Gasoline Project was well under way and the whole concept of club life had changed by the influx of a large number of construction men. In 1943 there were one hundred and seventy two Full club members, all Company employees, but by 1944, the number of members had risen to nine hundred and forty seven, the difference being made up entirely by the contractors' employees.

This disparity between the two types of members caused a waning of interest in club affairs and at the Annual General Meeting, held at the end of the year, only fourteen of the nomination papers, sent out for the purpose of electing a new committee were returned. Of the nominees eligible to stand, only two accepted and the formation of a committee was therefore impossible.

The outgoing committee, faced with this impossible situation, had no alternative but to hand the management back to the Company, which it did with the suggestion that club affairs should be handled by a Board of Trustees until such time as circumstances permitted the election of a further club committee. This suggestion was accepted and Trustees were appointed by the General Manager.

For the next seven years the Board of Trustees remained in being and continued to manage club affairs. Then, as a consequence of the number of additional amenities under construction or contemplated, it was decided that the club should be operated entirely by the Company. This became effective on 1st May 1953 at which time the subscription for Full Members was also abolished.

With the club as a centre, social life and recreation flourished in this period of the late thirties. The rough and tumble of the earlier days gave way to more gracious living and as the proportion of women to men increased so the amount of entertaining grew. Everyone it seemed was intent to make Awali a desirable place in which to live. More trees and shrubs were planted and gardens made. Seeds were sent for from places abroad and soon flowers appeared which had never been seen in Bahrain before.

With the building of additional family houses the bachelors found that, as more and more wives of their friends arrived, they also were drawn into the whirl of social life. Before, few invitations had come their way and those who had received them were often ridiculed by the fellows but now "being asked out" was a common thing. In other ways too life for them became more refined. A different atmosphere was present in the club and even in the bar where the regulars had their own pewter tankers hanging from the wall. In the dining hall the forms and scrubbed deal table tops disappeared and their places were taken by chairs and tablecloths.

Modes of dress and manners changed. The khaki clothes of yesterday were limited to working hours, and jackets and ties became the leisurewear or white trousers and shirts during the summer months. A few roughnecks remained and acted their part in the belief perhaps that the bad old days were best. Others again, probably unable to contain the streak of exhibitionism in their nature, paraded their foibles to the amusement or annoyance of others as the case might be. But, generally, all were tolerated with good-humoured forbearance, and life went on in a well-ordered way.

More and more, too; people began to turn to recreation to occupy their leisure hours. In the early days, the few employees living at Jebel Camp and its temporary nature had not justified the building of elaborate facilities. A tennis court, however, had been laid out on the site now occupied by the open production shed and, although no club was formed, tennis can in consequence claim the distinction of being the first outdoor game sponsored by the Company.

Later, when the first British employees arrived, a soccer pitch was marked out in the desert and, before long, games were being played with a local Bahrain eleven.

Organised recreation, however, really began with the construction of the new permanent camp. Two tennis courts were included in the club and a swimming pool was added in 1937. A site was chosen for a cricket pitch where it has remained ever since and opposite, on the other side of the Manama road, soccer and hockey pitches were laid out. Golf is another game that goes back to the early days of Awali when a nine-hole course, with the first tee located where Al Dar now stands, was constructed. With the building of the A.C. Camp, however, the area was required and the course was transferred to its present site. An additional nine holes was constructed in 1940. Interest by a group of employees led to the building of the first squash court at the club in 1937 and to the painting of lines on the floor of the auditorium for a badminton court.

From a rather haphazard beginning, recreation soon became established along more formal lines. Committees were formed to organise and direct individual games and, in September 1939, when the Company made a monthly grant to the club, recreation became its financial responsibility. In the following year, when the first club constitution was adopted, provision was made for the inclusion of recreation facilities and, from that time until 1952 when the management of the club was taken over by the Company, individual committees were elected each year and each sport became a section of the club. After 1952 this arrangement still continued except that recreation became the responsibility of the Company and the Committees liaised through a Recreation Supervisor.

With elected committees to direct their affairs the Recreation Sections soon became active in organising competitive activities. Competitions, matches and championships were arranged and trophies, some of which are still played for, began to make their appearance.

Certain sections, too, began to look outside Awali for opponents. The cricket section was perhaps the most active in this direction and, in 1936, began regular matches with ships of the Royal Navy that have continued to the present day. This was made possible by the building of the Naval Base at Jufair in 1935 where a pitch was laid down soon afterwards. In those early days matches were also played against Manama whenever the residents were sufficient in number to form a side.

The first team to visit Awali from outside Bahrain was probably a group of golfers from ARAMCO (CASOC as it was then named) who came over in 1940, when travel between the two countries was easy, to compete for the "Welder's Cup". This was a trophy, fabricated locally from a piece of steel pipe, welded to a flange and was played for over the next ten years or so when it was cast aside and forgotten.

In Bahrain these were carefree times, the like of which may never be seen again. Most of the employees were young and although salaries were low compared with the standards of today, everything was cheap and more fun to buy. The men who had come out as "bachelors" were now reunited with their wives; others were marrying and setting up a home for the first time. Few had been abroad before and on local leaves there were such exciting places as Tehran, Isphahan, Baghdad, Cairo, and Beirut to see.

But over Europe the war clouds were already gathering and news of the grave events taking place was listened to in Bahrain with as much concern as elsewhere in the world. For those in authority the year 1938 was an anxious time. Meetings were held and plans, kept secret from all but a very few, were prepared in case the worse should happen and hostilities break out.

Then over the radio came the more than welcome news of Chamberlain's talks with Hitler in Germany and the declaration they had signed in his Munich flat on the morning of 30th September. There was to be peace with honour; peace for our time.

The crisis was over, or so it seemed, and thankfully everyone settled down to the light-hearted way of life again. But the sense of relief was short-lived and, by the following spring, tension mounted again. The troops of Nazi Germany were on the march and Mussolini's forces occupied Albania. On 27th March the British Government introduced conscription; guarantees were given to Poland; everywhere preparations were being made for war. At dawn on 1st September 1939, Germany attacked Poland and on the third the Prime Minister made the momentous announcement. War had been declared on Germany.

CHAPTER IV

THE WAR YEARS

In Bahrain, as in other places in the world, the outbreak of war was followed by a period of tension and uncertainty. How long would it last and what did the future hold were questions no one could answer.

Immediately, however, there was a great deal of activity. The Company's areas of operations were declared protected places to which entry was forbidden without permission. The emergency scheme which had been filed away with such relief the year before was put into force. An organisation was set up for defence duties and a number of employees were appointed as Special Police Officers.

Emergency regulations were issued by the Political Agent and the Bahrain Government. A speed limit of twenty-five miles an hour was imposed in Awali and on the roads to the Refinery and Sitra Pier. Warnings were issued regarding the excessive buying of foodstuffs and hoarding and in the club the bar hours were reduced to 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and to 7.00 p.m. to 11.00 p.m. in the evening.

But a great number of British employees were concerned with a more urgent personal problem. Many thought it their duty to volunteer for active service but most were to suffer disappointment. Within three weeks of war being declared all were informed by the Political Agent that they were "performing an important national service by remaining in their present employment"; later this was repeated more forcibly when they were told that the petroleum industry had been declared a reserved occupation. Eventually a few were released but the vast majority had to be content, despite their appeals, to spend the war years in Bahrain.

As month followed month the tension slackened. The hostilities seemed so far away and had little affect on those living in Awali. There were no shortages and, apart from the news, few reminders that a war was in progress, Social life continued as before, even perhaps more gaily and with more abandon as the future seemed so uncertain. As late as the early months of 1940 employees were still taking their leave as if nothing had happened. Passages were fairly easy to obtain even by the overland route from Basra to Istanbul and thence across Eastern Europe by train to Paris. Later, however, the freedom of movement was curtailed and an alternative leave plan was announced by the Company "to enable employees to defer long leaves until the cession of hostilities or the return of transportation to normal". This allowed a person who had completed thirty months of his current Foreign Service Agreement to take short leave, in lieu of long leave, of not less than thirty-six days for which the Company would pay the fare. Certain areas were approved to which employees were allowed to go and these include Karachi, Bombay, Indian Hill Station, Haifa, Beirut and Teheran. The plan also stipulated that the employee must return to Bahrain and complete another twelve months' service before taking further leave. Kashmir proved a popular place and so did South Africa from where a number of bachelors returned richer than when they left, accompanied by a wife.

With the fall of France, Bahrain became more isolated but still life continued much as usual. Unlike those at home the people of Awali were not faced with the constant threat of invasion nor exposed to the perils of air raids, neither were they called upon to fill the auxiliary services. Their contribution to the war effort amounted to no more than the usual day-to-day task of ensuring the uninterrupted production, refining and shipping of oil. To a great number this modest part they were called upon to play seemed inadequate and even frustrating. Many suggestions were made and schemes proposed and, in consequence a Local Volunteer Defence Force was formed and a Bahrain War Fund was established.

As soon as the formation of the Bahrain Local Volunteer Defence Force was announced there was a ready response by the British employees of the Company, and others working in Manama also hastened to join. An armoury was provided in what is now Bachelor Quarters 49 - 51 where a Defence Officer, who had arrived earlier in the war with fifty irregular levies, had established his headquarters. Here, under his command training commenced. Later a regular army sergeant was seconded to Bahrain for this purpose.

As more arms and equipment arrived the force was organised as a company of three platoons, each with two rifle and one light automatic machine gun sections. Discipline was perhaps not that which would have been expected of such a unit in the regular army but, for most part, individuals took their training seriously and on two evenings each week the stamping of feet, the click of rifle bolts and shouted orders coming from the parade ground showed where they were learning the mysteries of drill and the rifle, the intricacies of the light machine guns and the art of throwing hand grenades.

The Bahrain War Fund came into being in July 1940 as the accepted agency through which the wishes of the community with regard to the raising and distribution of funds for war charities should be carried out. A committee of eleven members was elected to represent both the Awali and Manama communities and act as trustees for all money collected. In actual fact the Bahrain War Fund had its beginning in another group, known as the "Forty-thieves", which had been formed much earlier but on a parochial basis to collect money for the same purpose and which now magnanimously handed over its funds to the more comprehensive body.

The foundation of the fund, it was decided, should be a monthly subscription that would represent a steady income. In addition, various groups were encouraged to sponsor activities to raise money and the committee agreed to arrange a function each month if no other group did so. The fund immediately received outstanding support and at the end of the first year of its existence had collected and remitted over Rupees 111,000 which included the balance of Rupees 7,000 which had been handed over by the "Forty-thieves".

This calm and peaceful way of life, however, was soon to be shattered when on the night of, the eighteenth of October 1940 the refinery was bombed. Without warning three aircraft, flew over, guided easily by the blaze of lights and dropped their bombs. Inexplicably no one was hurt and no damage was done. The next day a survey showed eighty-six craters in two lines running approximately north and south across the present separator area. Three bombs had not exploded and these were dug out and destroyed. The bombs were small and thought to be converted shell cases but, for all that, would have created havoc if they held fallen inside the refinery.

It was later determined that the planes were Italian which had flown from the Dodecanise Islands and had landed in Italian Somaliland, a remarkable achievement in those early days of the war. After leaving Bahrain the same planes dropped twenty-eight bombs near Dhahran in Saudi Arabia but there again no damage of any consequence was done.

Following the air raid a wave of activity swept through Bahrain. No one knew if the enemy would strike again. The next night and for two weeks afterwards, members of the Local Volunteer Defence Force were deployed around the Refinery armed with machine guns; the Refinery was blacked out and immediately the construction of air raid shelters began.

To American employees and their families the air attack posed another problem. The United States, as yet, had no concern with the war and they were therefore faced with the decision of whether to stay or to leave. The tanker "Bahrain" was in the anchorage and the Company acted quickly. Officers and men gave up their quarters; temporary accommodation was erected on her decks and in the space of a short time she was converted into an evacuation ship. A number of employees and most of the American wives decided to leave and set sail for India on their long voyage home.

On the twenty-ninth October, official blackout regulations came into force throughout the whole of Bahrain. These made it an offence for any light to be shown in the open without permission of the Political Agent except for hurricane lamps and similar small lamps burning through a Wick. All lights in shops, houses and buildings were also to be screened to prevent light greater than the above being visible from outside. The dimming of motor vehicle lights was also made obligatory under the same regulations. Headlights were to be painted black with a non-translucent paint except for a horizontal strip across the width of glass, one inch deep and below the centre line of the lamp. Also an unpainted strip was allowed in the form of a rectangle one inch wide and two inches long with its base on the centre line of the lamp glass. Sidelights were also to be painted black except for a circle of one inch in diameter in the centre of the lamp. The number plate lamp was to be blacked out completely and the red glass of the tail lamps except for a circle of one inch in diameter. These blackout restrictions continued until the middle of 1943.

Soon other defensive measures were put in hand. Two naval guns arrived and one, a 12-pounder High Angle Gun, was set up on the bluff above the pitch ponds and the other, a 3-inch Quick Firing A.A. Gun, outside the north gate of the refinery. The guns were manned by skeleton crews of the Royal Navy assisted at night by Local Defence Volunteers. Five anti-aircraft light machine gun posts were also established around the units in the refinery and three in the tank field. These again were to be manned by Local Defence Volunteers within five minutes of any warning or by other employees, specially trained for the purpose, if a crew was not available.

In addition a searchlight, originally mounted on a truck, was sited permanently a few hundred yards south of the refinery together with a sound locator. These were also manned by the Local Defence Volunteers and the latter was in fact a "brain child" of two of its members who designed it from wooden horns, rubber tubing and a stethoscope!

Experiments were also made with a dummy refinery that was marked out to the south of the refinery proper to act as a decoy to hostile aircraft on moonlight nights. Buildings units and tanks were simulated by oiling, shapes in the sand whilst upturned, bottomless drums in which hurricane lights were placed every night completed the deception. It was not a success and was soon abandoned but its possibilities were not completely discarded as a similar project was proposed again in later years.

Meanwhile the building of air-raid shelters was pushed forward with all speed. In Awali the area was divided into eighteen zones each with its own shelter. The majority were constructed of curved steel plates, covered with sand bags but below House 3 and in the "Glen" caves in the hillside were used and the swimming pool was covered to make another. Wardens were appointed and Air Raid Instructions issued. In the event of a raid, the warning was to be a long warbling blast of the siren which was a signal for all women and children to take shelter and for the men to go to their posts of duty. In the refinery reinforced concrete shelters were also provided and in remote areas zigzag breastworks of sand bags were built up in strategic places.

Whether these defensive measures would have been effective against a determined attack will not be known. Fortunately they were never tested, as raiding aircraft never appeared over Bahrain again.

However, as time passed and nothing further happened, the tension eased again and the air raid was almost forgotten. Life returned to normal scarcely affected as yet by shortages or other hardships of war. Little by little they were to come as transport became more difficult and supplies impossible to obtain. For the time being, however, by substituting one thing for another those in Bahrain fared very well. Letters and even magazines came regularly without a great deal of delay and in fact did so throughout the war. Censorship was of course imposed and letters were written and received on the special form designed for microfilming.

During the following year the entry of Russia into the war brought great activity to the Gulf area. In the last few days of August 1941 the almost peaceful occupation of Iran was completed and the creation of a major supply route to Russia was begun. There were many comings and goings of high-ranking officers but little else disturbed the quiet of Bahrain.

In the early part of 1942, however, world events gave a new urgency to defence measures on the island. Pearl Harbour had happened and Rommel had reached Egypt. It seemed the Middle East was threatened from the land and from the Indian Ocean and that the Gulf itself was in danger of invasion.

Throughout the winter of 1941 and during the following spring members of the management had regularly attended meetings of the Iraq and Persian Division of the London Petroleum Board, held in Baghdad, and it was decided that protective works should be put in hand. An officer of the Royal Engineers arrived in Bahrain in April and he and the Company prepared a scheme for P.A.D. works to protect its operations.

In the refinery this included the erection of retaining and blast walls and the sheathing of all storage tanks. The latter consisted of building reinforced concrete foundations and brick walls, stepped back at various heights, around each tank to give protection against bomb splinters and blast. The design was completed and included brackets for moving out stairways, lintels over manholes and a panel, a little larger than one tank plate, for access for future internal repairs and which was to be built in bricks laid in sand and pointed in cement.

It had been agreed the project would be a combined operation. The 10th Army in Iraq was to provide bricks, cement, reinforcing steel and whatever plant it could muster whilst the Company would be responsible for labour, scaffolding, sand, aggregate and any deficiencies in equipment.

In May a small detachment of officers and N.C.O's arrived in Bahrain and the first shipment of bricks was despatched by Dhow from Basra on the fifth and was unloaded at Sitra Old Pier.

The work began on the twentieth May and for a few weeks all was confusion. The refinery tankfarm, normally quiet and almost deserted, was full of men and bricks and scaffolding. Heaps of sand and aggregate were everywhere and to crown everything the Iraqis who had been brought to Bahrain to act as foremen bricklayers went on strike. However, order was soon restored and the work went ahead.

At the end of June a change was made in the original plan and instead of work proceeding on all tanks simultaneously it was decided the process tanks should be completed first and the remainder in accordance with a list of priorities.

Soon, however, a real crisis developed when it was learned that no more bricks would be available in Iraq. A substitute had to be found and the decision was made to use "coral stone" from the seabed that was available locally. A source of supply was discovered in the shallows, north of Zellaq and local firms were invited to submit tenders for digging it up and bringing it ashore. To facilitate this the masonry T-head jetty at Zellaq was built to which the "coral" was delivered by local boats and where it was measured before trucking to the refinery. This pier still remains and has proved an excellent adjunct to the beach facilities although this is a use for which it was not originally intended.

Early in 1943 it seemed that the threat to Bahrain had receded and the decision was made to discontinue the work as soon as the stocks in hand were exhausted. The actual work came to an end in March 1944.

Records kept at the time show that over seven million bricks, nearly a half million cubic feet of rock and two thousand four hundred tons of cement were used. In addition, nine thousand tons of sand had been collected locally and fourteen thousand tons of rock had been crushed for aggregate.

Many of the walls stand today, some completed and others, practically finished, remain as they were when the work came, to an end.

In addition to the tank-sheathing programme other defence measures were designed, approved and put in hand. At the outbreak of war the Company had immediately taken steps to protect the oil wells from sabotage and aerial bombing, and now a denial scheme was begun which would prevent the enemy - if in temporary occupation of the island - from producing oil or sabotaging the reservoir when they were driven out again.

Plans were also made for the complete denial of the refinery and shipping facilities. Army experts arrived and carried out the preliminary work which included not only the demolition of plant but also the dispersal and destruction of stores and materials. Personnel who would stay behind and carry out the denial scheme were listed and arrangements for training them were made but fortunately they were never called upon nor their services needed.

The possible evacuation of people and vital records was also considered. Crates were made and placed in offices, and employees were appointed to pack designated plans and papers at a moment's notice.

Other projects too were studied. A plan was prepared for the installation of a balloon barrage to protect the refinery from dive-bombing attacks. This included the erection of a hydrogen manufacturing plant to service fifteen balloons but the project was deferred and finally abandoned. The question of a dummy refinery was revived but the divergence of opinion was so great that no actual plan could be agreed and nothing came of it. A plan for a smoke screen at the refinery was proposed but this too did not materialise.

For some time the possibility of shipping being attacked whilst approaching Bahrain or in the anchorage at Sitra had caused concern. Instructions had been issued to Masters regarding warnings and precautions to be taken. It was now decided that some definite action was needed to guard against the possibility of the channel being mined from the air. A plan was prepared by the Royal Navy, in consultation with the Company, and sixteen marker buoys were fabricated and laid by the Company in a line from the wharf, seawards, to the South Sitra Beacon. To each buoy a local dhow was moored from which a watch was kept to report the bearing of any mine that might be dropped.

Meanwhile, regular troops had arrived. A detachment of the Indian Army was installed in a barrasti camp situated along the Awali-Refinery road just before the turning to the present Driver Training area. Two Heavy A.A. Gun Sites were established by a detachment of the R.A., the remains of which can still be seen. One was located on the bluff south of the pitch ponds and the other along the power line road to the east of Rifa'a Camp. Other Light A.A. Gun Sites were also set up, outside the fence, around the refinery perimeter.

With regular troops stationed in Bahrain the Local Volunteer Defence Force became superfluous and was disbanded. Its members had given up many hours for training; they had been deployed after the air raid and had helped to man the first A.A. Guns. Perhaps on parade they had been a motley lot and perhaps they had gone about their duties with a careless abandon but they would have been happy to obey if called upon to go into action in the defence of Bahrain. It was with reluctance that they laid down their arms.

During the early years of the war no great suffering or inconvenience had been caused by shortages. Apart from defence projects little but essential maintenance had been done and existing stocks of materials had been conserved. But as time went on shortages became more and more critical and were to become progressively worse. Now it was a question of how to make do and mend.

In the workshops replacement parts, large and small, were fabricated from whatever materials were available, taxing the ingenuity of employees to the limit. The scrap pile became a mound of wealth. Roof trusses were fabricated from boiler tubes and lengths of pipe were welded together to make structural shapes. Corrugated iron sheets that normally would have been thrown away were reused and used again. Bulk timber was ripped into planks and packing cases were carefully broken up for the lumber they contained. A small foundry for reclaiming and casting scrap brass and copper was constructed and pump impellers and hand tools successfully made.

Beer bottles and the like became objects of value and were never thrown away. Apart from the fact that suppliers, especially in South Africa, demanded their return before further stocks could be obtained they were needed to be shaped into glasses for the club. The laboratory was kept busy cutting them to size and it was practically a full time job for a club sweeper sandpapering the edges to make them safe. A few employees made it a hobby to collect different shapes and were always on the lookout for a different kind of bottle to cut down and add to their collection.

Transport in particular was difficult to maintain. Spare parts were unobtainable but by some means or other a number of vehicles were kept on the road although perhaps minus a mudguard, side windows or even a windscreen. Later a few coupes arrived and by removing the boot-flap and inserting a prefabricated "box" in the back they were converted into useful pickups.

Neither did employees fare much better. The shops in Manama, and they were infinitely fewer than now, gradually sold out until they were practically denuded. Occasionally a shipment of material or some other commodity arrived and there would be a concerted rush to buy. In one instance, at least, this was not without its humorous side when a woman, delighted no doubt by obtaining material for a new dress, found herself standing beside her hostess's curtains made from the identical stuff.

The men, less concerned about such things, and as if by common consent, were content with khaki drill with a sweater or two in colder weather. Their suits they kept for special occasions.

As imports became fewer, regulations were made for their control. The export of certain goods such as wheat, barley, flour, rice, sugar and dates were prohibited. Later such goods were imported by the Government itself and distributed to wholesalers for sale to ration cardholders at specified prices. Other items that included coffee, tea, cotton piece goods, tyres and electric batteries were controlled by limiting the retail price for which they could be sold.

In addition a Bahrain Food Committee was instituted which met at least once a month to fix retail prices for such commodities as meat, fish, eggs, charcoal, onions and potatoes.

In Awali the Company imposed its own controls and rations. During the first two years of the war none were necessary except that on 2nd September, 1939 the bar hours had been curtailed as a purely temporary measure and opened only from 11.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. in the morning and from 7.00 p.m. to 11.00 p.m. in the evening. At the time it had been stated, "For the present there will be no rationing of liquor stocks but employees are expected and requested to use their discretion in ordering any liquors. No person will be allowed to 'stack' drinks. The Club Secretary had been given full authority to see this is enforced. Any abuse of this ruling will lead to closing the bar completely and stopping all liquor sales through the club and commissary".

This happy state of affairs was no doubt due to the high standard of living which had developed in the late thirties when a variety of wines, sprits and liqueurs had been built up to suit every taste. Stocks were therefore plentiful and as late as the end of 1941 members of the club had a choice of five brands of gin, seventeen of liqueurs, nine sherrys, fourteen whiskeys and twenty soft drinks whilst nine different cocktails were available over the bar.

It was obvious however, that this life of plenty could not continue and on 1st January 1942 it became necessary to impose a ration. At first only purchases for home consumption were affected and there was no restriction of sales over the bar. The ration consisted of two bottles of whisky per bachelor each month and three bottles for each family; one bottle of brandy for each bachelor or family every two months and three cartons of cigarettes a month for each member of the club.

During April of the same year it was decided to adopt new club hours and the bar was open as follows:-

Weekdays 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and 5.00 p.m. to 11.00 p.m.
Thursdays 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and 5.00 p.m. to 12 midnight
Fridays 9.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. and 5.00 p.m. to 11.00 p.m.

In July further restrictions were considered necessary. Beer was rationed for the first time to twenty-four quarts for each member per month. At the same time the bar hours were shortened as a further step towards conserving stocks.

The hours were:-

Weekdays 10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. to 11.00 p.m.
Thursdays 10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. to 12 midnight
Fridays 10.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. to 11.00 p.m.

Club members were also informed that in England and in South Africa the practice of "no treating" had been adopted with considerable success and were asked to follow the same practice in an attempt to conserve supplies which were becoming more and more difficult to obtain.

Despite the arrival of certain supplies from South Africa and Australia further restrictions became necessary during the year. In September gin was rationed to one bottle per month for each full member of the club and in December the monthly ration available was:-

Beer: Two dozen quarts for each full member.
Gin: One bottle for each full member.
Whisky: Two bottles for each full member and one bottle for wives.
Cigarettes: Four hundred for each full member and also for wives.

As yet no ration was placed on drinks purchased over the bar

However, at a club meeting held on 25th May 1943 the committee was, without warning, faced with a situation that was to remain a problem of the first magnitude until the end of the war.

At that meeting the Chairman announced that he had been advised by the Company that it expected the arrival of a large number of construction men and that the committee should begin to consider what arrangements should be made to provide recreational facilities for them. The number of men, it was stated, was likely to be fifty in June arising to five hundred by December. To add to the consternation caused by this announcement was the fact that only a few months' supply of whisky and beer remained at the present consumption and that it was unlikely that more of the former would be forthcoming although it was possible that additional beer might be obtained.

After considerable discussion it was agreed that the construction men should become "Special" Members of the club and should pay the same dues as Full Members but have neither powers to vote nor any hand in its management.

The question of liquor rations, however, was not so easily disposed of. Eventually it was decided to abolish the existing system of rationing and institute in its place a "points system" which would permit an individual to choose his own type of drink. For this purpose all drinks whether consumed in the bar or otherwise were to be included and one pint of beer would equal one peg of spirits or one glass of wine. To make this simple to operate in practice a card was designed on which was printed forty-eight numbers or "points", each of which would be punched out when a purchase was made.

As a transition period it was decided to retain the normal bottle ration during July and to introduce the new points system only for sales over the bar. In August, however, the complete points system was imposed and each member was allocated forty-eight points and each wife a card of twenty-four points.

This system remained in force throughout the remainder of the war but fortunately the Committee's rather pessimistic view of the future did not materialise as supplies of some sort or other arrived it fairly regular intervals. It was, therefore, possible to increase the ration to as much as fifty-six points during some months and also make a supplementary issue of a particular commodity when stocks warranted it.

In fact members of the club fared very well especially as a number did not drink, and their rations were given, sold, bartered or by some other means transferred to those who did.

Whilst the liquor ration entailed certain hardships, real or imagined, the shortage of food caused more concern. In the early days of the war supplies had been adequate but as time went on the position deteriorated. The fact that, apart from a certain amount of local meat, all supplies, had to be imported added to the problem and, soon, powdered egg, dehydrated potatoes and other wartime substitutes appeared with monotonous regularity.

At the end of 1942 the Company, in an attempt to alleviate the situation and perhaps over optimistically, decided to start a poultry farm. A part of a bunkhouse was converted into an incubator and brooder house and the Engineering Department was soon involved in obscure calculations trying to design the equipment. Meanwhile, chicken houses and pens were erected in the Company garden but the experiment was not a success. The hatch was small and apart from shortcomings in the incubator, many of the eggs were infertile and of the chicks hatched a large proportion died probably due to improper feeding. Neither did the adult birds it was possible to raise do much better. The egg production was low and fattening was only partially successful.

After the first experiments the hatching of chicks was discontinued but the laying hens and a few ducks were retained and moped away an unhappy existence for a couple of years to come.

Another project began with a flourish but it too was soon abandoned. Under the embankment of the pitch ponds, beside the road to Askar, a vegetable garden was started. The ground was levelled, ditched and ploughed and the Awali sewer line that passed close by was "tapped" and the sewage diverted to it for irrigation. Cabbages and tomatoes grew well and no doubt within a few years a productive garden would have been developed. In the meantime, however, those in authority were having second thoughts about the wisdom of using untreated sewage; caution prevailed and the scheme came to an end.

The garden, however, continued in cultivation for some years to come being used by the Pony Club for the growing of alfalfa for the stables. A little scrub is all that now remains to show that it ever existed.

By the beginning of 1943 the supply of meat on the island was becoming increasingly scarce and the Company decided to try the experiment of bringing cattle in "on the hoof" for slaughter here. The help of Caltex (India) Limited was sought and thirty head of cattle and thirty sheep were purchased in Bombay and arrangements made to ship them by tanker to Bahrain.

Pens were erected on deck and the animals loaded, together with fifty pounds of rock salt and fodder for the voyage. The journey was uneventful and it was reported none of the animals showed sign of seasickness and, being underfed when put on board, even gained weight on the way.

The ship arrived in February and the animals were penned in the Company garden where, for a time, their bellowing and bleating swelled the hubbub made by the cackling ducks and chickens already installed there. Two of the cattle were slaughtered at once and twelve more during the month. Two died and the remaining fourteen were killed in March. Of the sheep, thirteen were slaughtered in February and fourteen in March; the other three died and were "written off". Although the experiment was reasonably successful, yielding about seven hundred pounds of mutton and eight thousand pounds of beef, it was not tried again.

However, later in the war, one further cargo of livestock arrived although it was not of the Company's choosing. In August 1944 a quantity of fresh meat, although difficult to spare, was supplied to a tanker on the understanding it would be replaced. This "debt" was repaid in January 1945 by the arrival of sixteen live sheep from Kherramshahr!

Despite all attempts to stave off the evil day it was inevitable that food rationing would come and it presented the Company with a problem - the perennial one of bachelors versus married folk. In those days bachelor messing was free and each individual ate what, and as much as, he liked.

In the messhall therefore the only solution was strict portion control with no second helpings and no substitutions. But those who came late were still at a disadvantage if those before them had been "heavy handed" with the milk or sugar bowl.

For the families a more equitable system was easy to find. For certain commodities a definite ration by weight was allowed and for others a points system, controlled by a ration card, was imposed. At the end of 1943 and the beginning of 1944 a typical ration per person per month was:

Butter 2 lbs	Bacon 2 lbs
Cheese 2 lbs	Ham 2 lbs
Coffee 2 lbs	Sugar 2 lbs
Fats 3 lbs	

Rations for tinned fruit and vegetables, the only kind available, were controlled by a ration card and each person was allowed twenty-eight points for the former and forty-two points for the latter; four points representing one pound of either item.

As with the liquor ration, bartering was common place and everyone lived fairly well. Substitutions, camouflage and other culinary wiles also helped a great deal to make the fare more interesting and somewhat less monotonous. One bachelor, determined to have a memorable birthday party despite the shortages, went so far as to make a cake of concrete, thinly iced, which when "cut" added more hilarity to the occasion than would one made from more orthodox ingredients.

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However, of all the events of the war none affected the community more than the arrival of the contractors force to undertake the construction programme of which the Club Committee had been warned in May of 1943. This vast project - "to increase refinery facilities and to produce aviation gasoline for military purposes" included the building of:

A fluid catalytic cracking plant
A gas concentration unit
A butane isomerization unit
An alkylation unit
No.2 power plant
New acid manufacturing and recovery facilities
An aviation acid treating plant
A central caustic dissolving plant
Two lead sulphide sweetening plants
Aviation gasoline ethylizing and inhibiting plants.
The conversion of the polymer plant to a thermal gas recovery unit.

Included also were the low lift pumphouse and salt water canal, No. 2 wharf, the pier head and causeway.

In December 1943 eighty-seven men arrived which increased to three hundred and fifty in the following February; four hundred and fifty in June and, by the end of 1944, there were six hundred and fifty construction men living in Awali.

Immediately, the comparative quiet was broken by a fever of activity and pandemonium reigned, not only in the refinery but also in every corner of Company operations. To accommodate these additional men in itself was a major problem. During the early part of the war the reduction of staff had resulted in housing to spare. Bachelors had moved to family houses and were living in comparative comfort but overnight; almost all this came to an end.

Additional showers were installed in a number of old gutch houses and they became communal living quarters; nine twenty-four room bunkhouses were erected and a fifty-two room bunkhouse, known as Bete al Kabir, and later converted into the East Hospital, was built. Alterations were made to the messhall; the laundry was extended and a dry cleaning room added and a third A.C. plant constructed.

Nowhere was the presence of these men felt more than in the club. Far outnumbering Company employees and with the attitude of "here today and gone tomorrow" the new arrivals cared nothing for the tradition which had been built up during the late thirties and the early days of the war. Club life deteriorated to such an extent that the very name became farcical. These men, or at least the majority of them, were tough and crude to whom the niceties of life meant nothing. Drunkenness and fighting were every day occurrences that it was impossible to control by appeals, rules or even threats.

The Club Committee carried on the best it could, subjected from all sides by abuse and criticism. The rationing of liquor helped to some extent to cut down drinking but at the same time, gave rise to other abuses such as bribery and the forgery of ration cards. As always with this type of men, with money and time to spare, gambling flourished and poker and crap games for stakes unheard of before became commonplace. Yet even here the Committee often became involved as exemplified by a man who wrote to say:

"A week ago while playing poker in the club reserved for that purpose, another player bet his hand after I had passed another man called and when it returned to me I called and raised the bet then this man objected to my bet and withdrew his bet from the pot and his only excuse was he didn't like to have a better hand checked into him in a poker game.

Now there is an agreement among the players that another player shall not check a clinch or an unbeatable hand. So after the play I showed my hand on the table to prove I did not have a chinch. Yet the man refused to give me the money I had won. I wish to present my case before the Board of Directors of the Bapco Club and ask to have this man barred from the Club and all the privileges that go, with membership".

But some instances had a less serious side or at least so they appeared when investigated. One individual, when asked to give an explanation for presenting a local watchmen with three cans of beer, wrote:

"..... I was very lonely and it was very noisy so as the evening progressed I became more despondent. And as I walked out upon the terrace I beheld the most beautiful heavens bathed with gentle beams of a romantic moon. One of these nights a person desires solitude whereby he can do a bit of reminiscing. So I ordered some beer for I know (or wished) that shortly quietness would descend upon the premises of the club. And as I sat in thought a person was removing the litter from about. And after a time he approached. 'Sahib do you wish to go home?' I did not so he took, a chair some distance away. Naturally I asked a few questions. And he happened to know the heavens and the sands of the desert very well. As we sat there I was using a penknife upon my fingernails. A gift which I have cherished for many years which also holds a razor edge. He admired it very much so I presented it is him with a chit confirming same, so as you say he returned the beer to the proper authorities. I would say it was in interest on my behalf and he just wished to preserve same for me. I am very sorry that this instance occurred and it is a reminder that in future refrain from leaving any unconsumed bottles and cans about".

By the end of the war most of the construction programme had been completed, except for the wharf and causeway. The latter had been designed to be built of two retaining walls filled in between with rubble, and a contract had been arranged with a local contractor to bring in "marubba" rock from the sea. For months dhows had been busy depositing their loads on the site and a start had been made with the building of the retaining walls. But the work was too slow and the scheme was changed an earth embankment to be laid over the rock already there.

A "borrow pit", located below Rifa'a to the north of Awali - Refinery road, provided material, and night and day trucks shuttled to and fro bringing its small quota of fill. Inch by inch, almost imperceptibly it seemed, the embankment crept forward until by the end of 1944 it was almost finished. However, grading and shaping had still to be done and it was not until the following year that it was completed. Meanwhile, the new wharf was finished and placed in service. With the opening of the new causeway giving direct access to marine facilities by road the era of the Old Sitra Pier and the Sitra Channel, which had served the Company so well for some thirteen years, came to an end.

On the other side of the island another project was under way. The land section of the A-B pipeline was completed in 1944 and the submarine section early in the following year. On 4th March 1945 the last cargo of Arabian crude was received through the Zellaq facilities, which were then abandoned and further oil transported through the pipeline.

Meanwhile at Sitra the drum manufacturing and filling plant had been erected and placed on a preliminary operating basis. In 1947 when the Asphalt plant was built this facility was extended again by the installation of additional machinery for the manufacture of asphalt drums.

Whilst the effects of wartime shortages were alleviated somewhat by the Company's untiring efforts to procure supplies of food and drinks other necessities normally purchased in the bazaar were still unobtainable. It suggested therefore that a cooperative purchasing committee should be formed consisting of five members who would prepare consolidated orders and attempt to obtain goods through the Company's purchasing agents abroad. At the same time it was also proposed that the Club Committee should, in the same manner, obtain articles such as toilet preparations for sale on the Club premises.

The proposal has approve on 23rd December, 1943 on the basis that one member of the committee should be a member of the Club Committee and that the scheme should operate under the general auspices of the Bapco Club. Thus began an undertaking that was to provide an inestimable service to employees extending to long after the war.

A "Co-op Shop", as it became known, was provided in the club building; members freely gave of their time to serve behind the counter and to carry out the many tasks involved and, before long, a thriving business was established. As time went on the committee became more ambitious and soon employees were able to purchase almost everything from toilet articles to clothing, and a whole host of necessities such as candy, buttons and ink.

Such was the popularity of the Co-op Shop that in his report for the year 1944 the Chairman of the Club Committee reported that during the previous twelve months ten thousand candy bars, eighteen thousand razor blades, three thousand shirts and a thousand pairs of trousers had been sold. However, as more and more goods began to appear in the shops after the war a move was made to close the "Co-op Shop" and it finally came to an end in January 1951.

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During the war years very little permanent building work was done except that a number of industrial buildings were extended from materials on hand. However, in 1943 the four bachelor quarters 61 - 64 were built. At the time they were somewhat startling innovations as they were, and still are, the only double storey houses to be built in Awali. In 1940 a hollow concrete block building with a corrugated asbestos roof was erected for use as a temporary Church. In 1959 it was re-designed and re-constructed in the form of a nave with two side chapels, as it exists today.

With the arrival of the construction men the twenty-four room bunkhouses were built and after their departure were used to accommodate Company employees. Later, when not required as living quarters, they were assigned to other uses such as school classrooms, storage, buildings and offices. The fifty-two room bunk-house also built to house the contractors employees was converted in 1947 to a hospital but since 1962 when the beds were transferred to the original hospital, it has stood empty apart from a portion occupied by the Awali Industrial Clinic.

In 1943 it was also decided to build thirteen three bedroom family houses, six in the upper camp and seven in the lower camp immediately the question arose as to whether minerals were available. Careful surveys were made of Company stocks and ARAMCO were appealed to for help; eventually sufficient were accumulated and the houses completed in 1944.

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At last, however, the war in Europe drew to a close. On 7th May 1945 an unconditional surrender was signed at 2.41 a.m. and all hostilities ceased at midnight. Almost immediately British employees were able to leave for home. In Japan, a few months later, in instrument of surrender was signed on 2nd September on board the United States battleship MISSOURI. World War II was over.

CHAPTER V

THE POST WAR PERIOD

The period immediately after the war was one of expansion but it was not without its frustrations. There was so much to do but materials were still in short supply. One of the most pressing problems was housing. In 1941 the number of \$/£ employees had been 190, in 1947 it was 670 and in 1951 it had reached the figure of over a thousand. Most of these new employees were single or on bachelor status and the bunkhouses, built for the construction men, and the bachelor quarters on the hill were full with two men sharing a room. To allocate space in these crowded conditions was no easy task and a points system was introduced so that an individuals lot was improved as soon as it became possible to do so. The assignment of family houses was even a greater problem and it was often two years or more before a man's wife and family could join him in Bahrain.

At once a start was made. A new housing area was laid out west of the A.C. camp and the first seventeen houses completed in 1945, whilst another twenty were begun and completed in 1946. At the same time a comprehensive plan was prepared for the construction of Salman Avenue housing blocks stretching along it as far as the present Zellaq Gate, In fact three house shells (later to become Houses 497, 498, 499) were erected at a midpoint to serve as warehouses for materials whilst the project was under way. Later, however, the programme was curtailed and only twenty houses were built at that time, the remainder being included in appropriations for following years. In fact it was not until 1950 that the three house shells were completed and, the design of houses having been changed in the meantime, they can now be recognised as being different from their neighbours.

In 1947 another thirteen houses were completed and sixteen duplexes begun which carried the housing area past the present theatre as far as the road to the library. Before this increment was started considerable thought had been given to the possibility of building a cheaper house, quicker to construct and needing fewer imported materials. Such a house was designed and two prototypes built from concrete blocks with pre-cast concrete roofs. The result however did not come up to expectations and the scheme was abandoned. These two houses standing like aliens amongst others that surround them are numbered 457 and 458. Another departure also occurred at that time when houses 459 to 474 were designed as duplexes, a type last built in 1939.

The 1948 programme was even larger when forty-five two-bedroom houses, twenty duplexes and sixteen court apartments were begun. New types of quarters for bachelors were also included and fifteen one-bedroom, seven two-bedroom and twelve four-bedroom, houses were built. At the same time seventy-four additional units and fifty-two bachelor accommodations were planned for 1949, for which the fence was extended as far as the present Zellaq Gate making the area of Awali some three hundred and ninety acres.

But still house building did not end. For the next seven years it continued at the north end of Awali, along the western fence and even amongst the old gutch houses on the hill.

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Throughout these years much other building work was in progress.

Al Dar was completed in 1949 and with it came a new type of architecture and a new concept of interior decoration to Bahrain. Before, most people had been content with uniform pastel shades but these more striking, dark coloured walls became a vogue that still exists today.

In the following year Al Bustan, the Vice President's house and office in Manama, was also completed and brought to a conclusion a scheme that had been mooted some fifteen years before. In 1935 it had been proposed and accepted that the General Manager should live in Manama; land had been purchased and a house designed. Building even began but after the foundations were completed the project was abandoned although the land was retained. The design had been a revolutionary one in those early days. Whilst the house had been planned with open verandahs of the type then common in Manama, it was also proposed that certain rooms should be air-cooled. If it had been completed it would have been the first house of its kind in Bahrain but the same amenity soon came when the A.C. Camp was built in Awali.

Meanwhile the building of the new theatre had begun and was completed in 1952. Thus ended the era of the open-air cinema that had lasted for nine years since the old auditorium was gutted by fire on Christmas Eve 1943.

Amenities too were extended. A second squash court and the upper terrace were added at the club. A proposal was made for the building of a civic centre on and below the bluff north of the cricket field. The scheme included a hall, terraces and patio, swimming pool, squash courts and tennis courts. The scheme was not approved in its entirety but three new tennis courts and swimming pool were completed on the site in 1951 and the squash courts added in 1956. The Awali Hall which took the place of the larger more comprehensive building originally proposed was opened in 1955. Two years later a sports area was completed north of the Sitra Gate Camp and the old soccer and hockey pitches, on the opposite side of the Manama road to the cricket field, which had given such good service throughout the war years and after were abandoned.

Of all the amenities provided in Awali, perhaps none has been as popular with the community as the library. At first located in the club and then transferred to the school in 1950 it found a setting worthy of it when the new library was opened in 1954.

With the vast construction programme at the end of the war the existing Awali industrial area became totally inadequate to cope with these increased facilities. The sheds and buildings had been erected during the early days when the oil field was being developed and most had already been extended many times. It was decided therefore that it was more economic to abandon the old and begin anew. The refinery was the area from which most of the work would come and it was there a new machine and welding shop was built in 1945 and a storehouse in 1947. Transport facilities, however, remained in Awali and a new transport office was completed in 1947 and new workshops in 1958.

Office space too had become critical despite the many alterations to the main office. To alleviate the position the Engineering Department was moved in 1947 to the wing of the Awali Dining Hall that had been built to accommodate the construction men. In 1950, however, a complete new extension was added on the north side of the office and Engineering Department returned and remained until the Industrial Services Building at the north gate of the refinery was opened in May 1957.

During the post war period several further construction projects were undertaken in the refinery. Again the population of Awali was swelled by contractor employees but in 1957 for the No. 1 Unifiner/Platformer and No. 5 Vacuum Distillation Unit programme a separate camp was built at Rifa'a which included two large steel framed buildings for a recreation room and dining hall and eighteen bunkhouses for accommodation. A few years later the living quarters were demolished but the other two buildings were retained and used for storage. In 1959 when the club in Awali was destroyed by fire a new use made for one of them. The recreation building was reopened and redecorated and for more than two years was used as a temporary club. In 1962 when the new club was opened it was no longer needed and was locked up again.

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Following this period of growth that came after the war the more recent years have been ones of consolidation rather than expansion. At last it seems that housing, amenities and industrial facilities are abreast of the current pattern of operations.

In this new era the way of life is very different from what it was in earlier times and although there is no-one living in Awali now who can remember the first few years of the Early days there are still a few who can recall the middle thirties. These few can look back over the years to the time when the Jebel Camp was occupied and when Awali consisted of no more than a few houses on the hill; when the three tanks built by the EL SEGUNDO was all that existed at Sitra and when the refinery processed ten thousand barrels of oil a day. Others who came later may have wondered about the early days, the years of the war and after and it is for them that these pages have been written.

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