

# English-U.S. Amity Thrived Despite Early Obstacles

Beckles Willson, Canadian Author, Gives Intimate Sketches in Lives of Envoys---Praises Present Ambassador---Canada's Responsible Position.

(By Central Press Canadian)

Confident faith in the "ultimate complete moral unity of the white race," as represented by Great Britain and the United States, forms the basis of the latest contribution to modern historical literature by the Canadian-born author of "If I Had Fifty Millions." The book is "Friendly Relations" (McClelland and Stewart), by Beckles Willson.

Anglo-American diplomatic relations from 1791 to 1930 are covered in retrospect through the eyes of Britain's representatives to the land of stars and stripes. First in Philadelphia, and later in Washington, they view and interpret the changing scene. Their official reports, private letters and personal observations — together with a galaxy of documentary contributions of wives, friends, contemporary statesmen, diplomats and lesser dignitaries—are reproduced in quick succession garnished by a minimum number of qualifying observations of the author, to carry the reader through a century and a half of diplomatic progress.

The scope of Mr. Willson's book goes beyond the prominent political personages of the period. Sometimes their wives are described. English Envoy Francis Jackson seems to have taken a dislike to the wife of President Madison. "She is fat and forty, but not fair," he wrote. "She must, however, have been a comely person when she served out the liquor at the bar of her father's tavern in the State of Virginia."

The lot of the British minister was not always easy. Jackson was threatened with horse-whipping and tar-and-feathering. Altogether, his tenure of office was an unhappy one.

### Discusses War of 1812

The war of 1812-14 provides ammunition for one of the author's few controversial discussions. Describing the British capture and destruction of Washington in 1814, an act intended as retaliation for the destruction of York, the Upper Canadian capital, the year before, Mr. Willson asks: "Is any event in American history so absurdly exaggerated? Some members of the older school of native historians have not hesitated to turn to the exploits of Alaric and Atilla and the Romans in Carthage to find a parallel to the story of the 'want-on and atrocious burning of our noble capitol. . .'. But there has been a good deal of rectification of this sweeping judgment since. As for the wine in the cellars of the White House, of which there was a large quantity, it was not all drunk by the British at all, but 'was consumed by our own soldiers' (a quotation from a contemporary account)."

After the war, British Minister Charles Bagot had the opportunity of contributing much to United States fiscal policy. To offset forging of banknotes, he recommended the use of specially engraved plates developed by a friend of his. The recommendation was accepted, and the man who later was to be appointed Governor General of Canada had proved something more than a mere envoy.

The volume deals at length with the American civil war, the fight for the independence of Canada, the visit of King Edward VII as Prince of Wales to Canada and the United States and the Fenian raids.

In 1872 the British minister went house-hunting and finally secured a permanent residence for Great Britain's diplomats.

The routine business of the British embassy now involved Canadian questions, copyright,

immigration law, passports, fishery rules, canal tolls, the liquor and arms trade and railroad law.

Some idea of the high calibre of the men chosen wherever possible by the British Government to represent her in America is seen in the fact that at the first peace conference of The Hague in 1899, her minister to Washington, Lord Pauncefote, was chief British delegate.

Feeling toward Britain was improving. When Pauncefote died, his remains were returned to England on an American battleship and the flag on the White House

was lowered to half-mast, at the order of President Theodore Roosevelt.

### Canada's Representative

The spirit of good will grew—until now, the author points out, "thanks to the present British ambassador at Washington, Britain and America have presented a united front to the world in a time of crisis."

The relative importance to the British embassy of questions affecting Canada is stressed throughout the volume. But the British commonwealth of nations is no longer represented at Washington by an embassy alone, and the British ambassador is no longer the sole representative of the British sovereign. In this connection Mr. Willson cautions: "To co-operate on an equal responsibility with the ministers of Canada, South Africa and the Irish Free State may prove a task of the utmost delicacy and even of difficulty."

Fortunately, up to now, there has been only cordiality and mutual good will.

The entire book, in retrospect, is a study in comparisons.

### Author Canadian

Beckles Willson, from whose pen these comparisons flow, is well known to Canadians. Born in Montreal and educated in Kingston, he married a Colborne, Ontario girl, later moved to England, and now resides in France. While on the staff of the London Daily Mail he wrote many feature articles on colonial subjects. He served in the war with the Canadian Expeditionary Forces. Among his twenty-five or more outstanding published works are: "The Hudson's Bay Company," "The Romance of Canada" and "The Life of Lord Strathcona." His "Friendly Relations," given to the world as he nears his sixty-fifth year, is another milestone in a succession of valuable literary contributions.

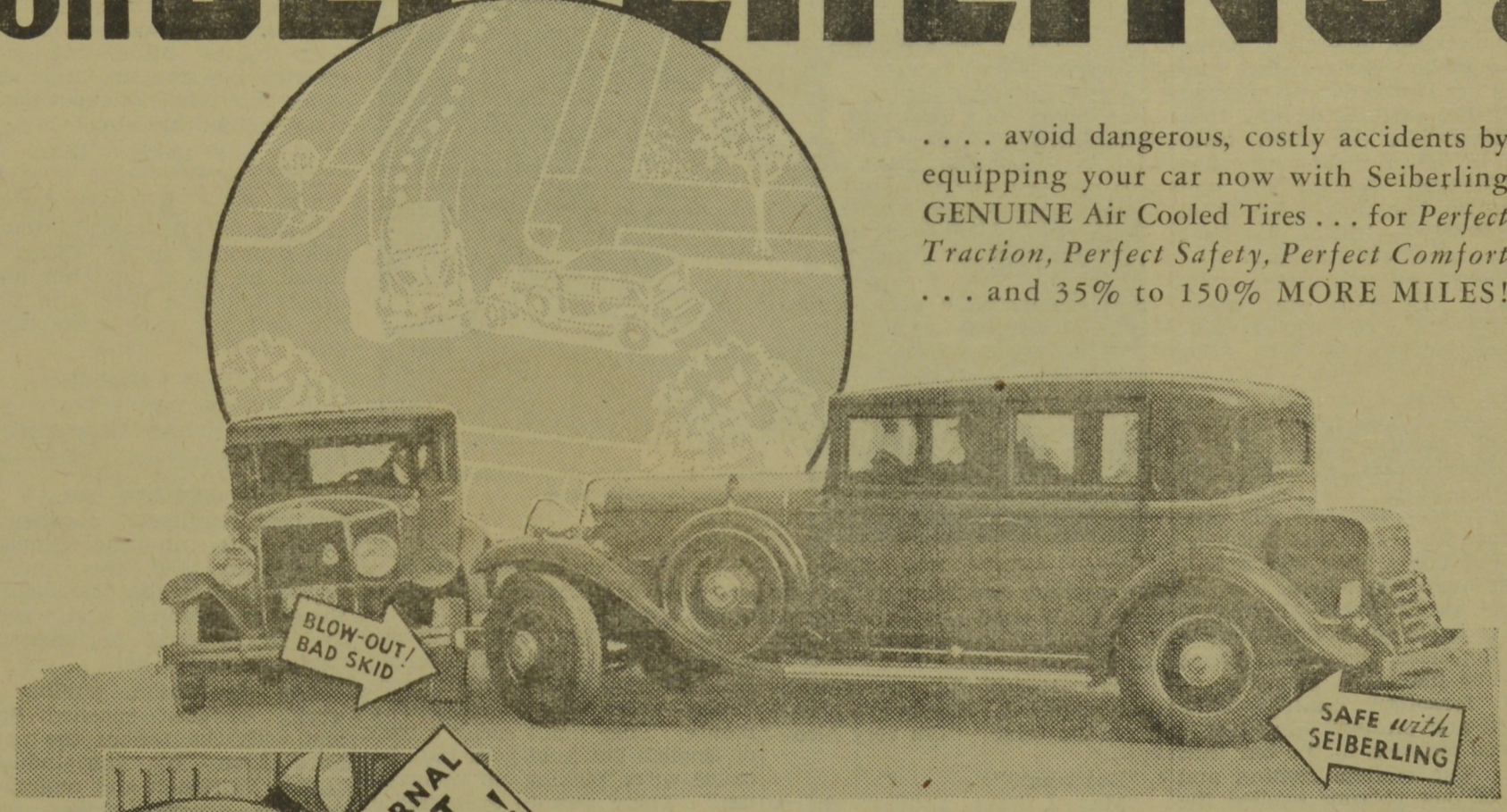
### EIGHT MILES HIGH

Every aeroplane has a height, technically known as its ceiling, beyond which it cannot rise, but until recently the exact limits of

an airman's endurance at high altitudes were unknown. Now, as a result of an experiment carried out at the Royal Air Force Establishment, South Farnborough, England, it has been ascertained that 43,000 feet — about eight miles — is the maximum height to which airmen, wearing the latest oxygen apparatus, can ascend with safety.

The hero of the experiment, Eric Taylor, a technical officer, allowed himself to be hermetically sealed in a specially-built steel chamber from which the air was slowly evacuated. He took notes of his impressions. At 35,000 feet a slight loss of color was noticeable; at 37,000 feet he took his own pulse and wrote it down; at 40,000 feet his color appeared paler; at 43,660 feet the tablet was seen to fall from his hands and his complexion turn a deathly ashen-grey. The experiment was stopped, air being restored to the chamber at the rate of 3,000 feet a second. On being released, Mr. Taylor had no recollection of fainting or having dropped his notebook.

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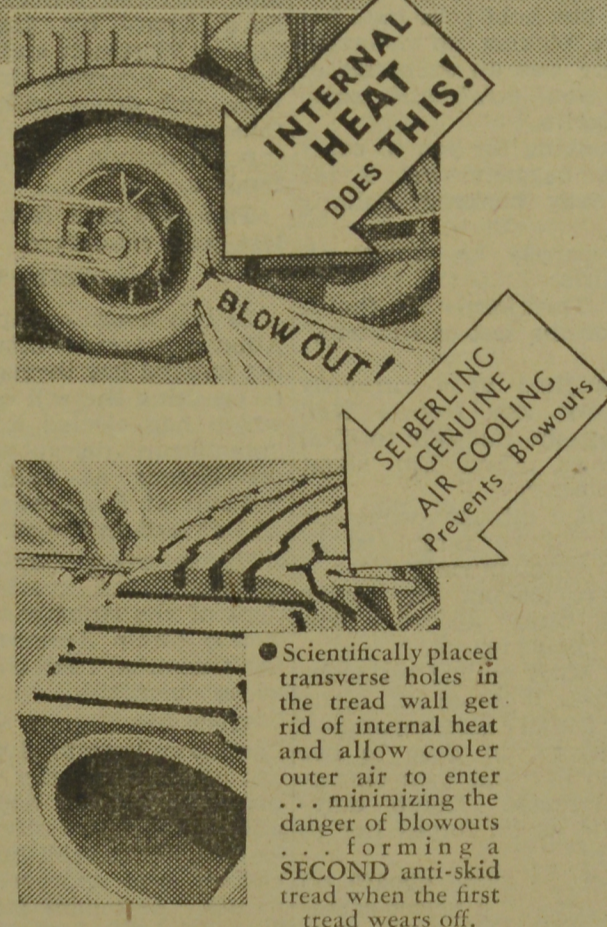
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