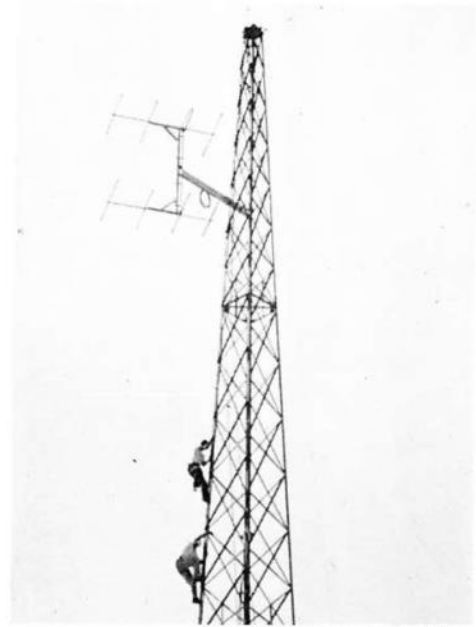


*An anxious moment! The two-stack yagi aerial for the Kuwait receiver sways upwards*



*Three photos by J. Palmer  
Here it is safely mounted, ready to carry telephone circuits between Kuwait and Iraq*

## Gulf Oil Link

By JOHN PALMER

THE LOSS OF Abadan to British oil interests caused considerable embarrassment and hardship to many, but it brought wealth to a small and little known community on the western shore of the Persian Gulf—Kuwait. For in Kuwait lies one of the richest oilfields in the world, and it was to this oilfield that we turned in the crisis.

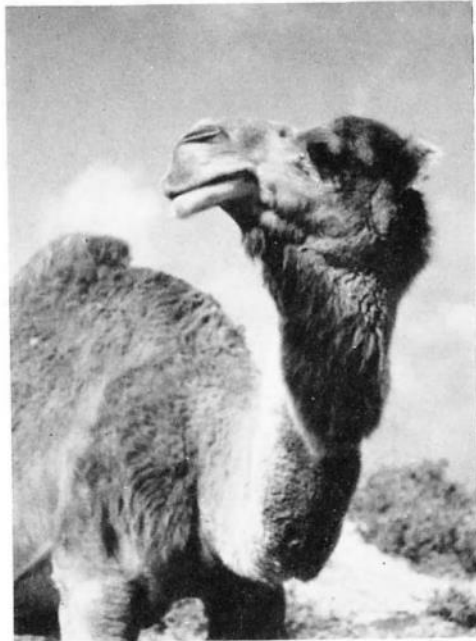
The independent Sheikdom probably remained almost unchanged for hundreds of years, a handful of hardy people extracting a precarious living from pearling, trading and fishing. The mud houses were hustled together on a small headland, surrounded on three sides by the oily gulf as protection from raiding

nomadic tribes. There were no farms, since no vegetation will survive in the hot sand of Arabia without water, and in Kuwait there is none to spare. The very little brought from Iraq by dhow, or from wells at oases inland by camel, was more precious than gold.

The discovery of oil suddenly changed Kuwait from a forgotten legend to a centre of world interest, and brought riches beyond the wildest dreams. The oil men of Britain and America arrived and started to change the face of the desert. The biggest distillery in the world was constructed, distilling a million gallons of water a day from the sea. Schools, hospitals and roads appeared, and communications developed.

This was where Marconi's came in. I have just returned from installing a VHF multi-channel equipment to link Kuwait, which was previously almost isolated by desert and gulf, with Iraq. I found it to be, like much of the Middle East, a place of contrasts and extremes. The streets are thronged with hooting Chevrolets, but no amount of hooting will disturb the placid disdainful progress of a camel carrying skins of water, or a flock of goats jammed in the Jahara Gate. As the dusk falls and the sky is lit by the oil flares at the wellheads, the age-old call of the muezzin echoes from the mosques.

Though I discovered later that they use loudspeakers now, I was not completely disillusioned. Although there are some things about it that I didn't like, such as the shade temperature in the hundred and twenties at this time of year, it has its fascination and I feel that we shall be hearing more of Kuwait.



R. Blake

*Modern communications in the desert forge ahead, but the camel goes on for ever*

*The tug-of-war team whose efforts raised the aerial to dominate the central square. The old town of Kuwait is rapidly expanding with the needs of the oil industry*

