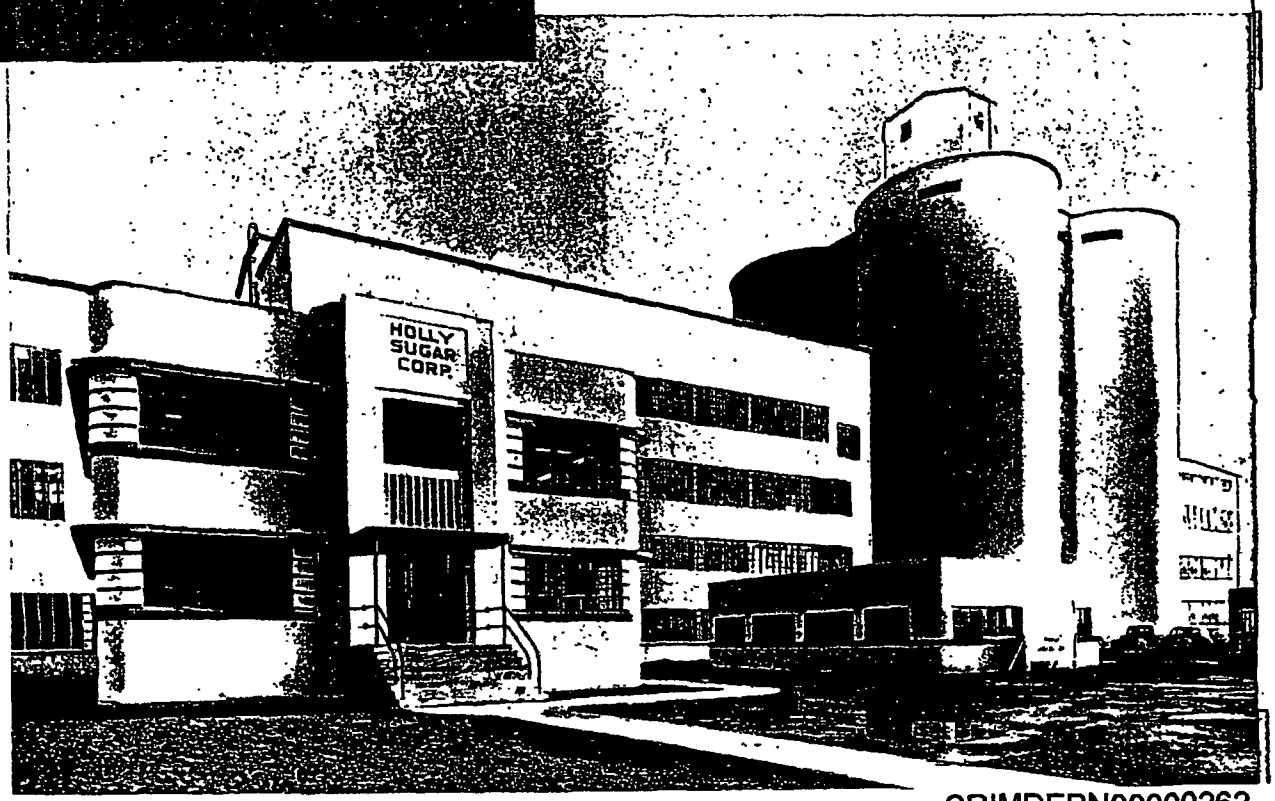
modern Sugar Factory in Imperial Valley

● Last summer, the twelfth beet sugar factory of the Holly Sugar Corporation, second largest beet sugar producer in the United States, went into operation in the Imperial Valley in southernmost California. This new plant was of such interest to the industry that the magazine "Sugar," in its September issue, carried a nine-page feature article on it, the article being illustrated with 35 photographs. The plant was also featured on the front cover of this magazine. The fine new factory, with a rated daily slicing capacity of 2700 tons of beets, actually reached slightly in excess of 3000 tons, resulting in a daily sugar production of 800,000 lb, has been named in honor of the late A. E. Carlton, formerly president of the Holly Sugar Corporation.

The location of the plant in the Imperial Valley gives rise to problems and advantages not found elsewhere in the world. Carlton is the only beet sugar factory in the world to be located below sea level. In fact, the lettering "Sea Level" is carried about 90 ft up on the exterior of the bulk sugar storage bins where they face U. S. Highway 99.

The Imperial Valley is proving one of the most fertile and profitable agricultural areas in the United States. With a total rainfall in 1947 of only 0.87 in., the valley depends entirely on irrigation water supplied from the Colorado River by means of the Imperial Dam and the All-American Canal. Some 370,000 acres are now under cultivation for all crops. Growers under contract to Holly had 29,000 acres of beets this year, and Carlton sliced beets from over 12,000 of these acres.

The Imperial Valley is the bed of the ancient Lake Coahuila, which was fed by the mud-laden waters of the Colorado River. The lake slowly decreased in size until it disappeared. Today, however, the shore line of old Lake Coahuila is still visible at several different locations along the edge of the valley. The Salton Sea was formed by a flood of the Colorado River in 1906. The New River was also formed at that time, in addition to the existing Alamo River. Bed rock is covered by an enormous layer of silt and sand, which in some places is 2000 ft thick. The valley is seismically active, earth tremors are not uncommon, and at least fourteen faults extend through the valley—two of them within a mile of the factory. So "earthquake" construction, in conformity with the Pacific Coast Uniform Building Code, was used in the plant's construction. Concrete piling was used under all loaded



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