

BOGOTÁ TRIP

At the end of July '38, the President sent me to Bogotá to be Special Ambassador at the inauguration of President Eduardo Santos. I had known President Santos when he was Minister for Foreign Affairs under the Olaya Herrera Government, and had a high regard for him.

I left Rio by Pan American plane on a Saturday morning at six, arrived at Recife, which we call Pernambuco, a little before five; was received by local officials, etc. Stayed the night with our Consul there, Newbold Walmsley, and ^{Teresa} his attractive Spanish-born wife. Off next morning at seven for Pará, where I arrived in the middle of the afternoon; reception by military and civilian officials; was the guest of the State

Government

Government: was entertained at several parties during the afternoon and a banquet that evening; was shown the sights: admired the fine mango trees; was delighted with the zoo and its collection of Guarás and the finest Macaws I have ever seen, with all the colors of the rainbow improved upon. Saw a lot of other curious birds; various sorts of "tigres"; sea cows; and so on.

Went to bed at midnight; was up to leave again at six for Trinidad. Was enchanted with the flight over the Amazon, which, from the farthest point south to the the farthest point north, counting its many channels and intervening islands, is one hundred and ten miles wide. Traveling in the plane was comfortable and we seemed to eat all day: we had breakfast before starting and at about ten

o'clock

o'clock were given sandwiches, then a full course luncheon at one, and grapefruit juice any time we wanted it. A good part of the time it was very cold because we were flying high. As you fly for hours over a tangled solid mass of tree tops, every now and then you wonder what would happen if you had to land.

The day we crossed the Equator, which the pilot crossed with a little jump, I had on my overcoat and two blankets. I was interested in the Amazon in the Island of Marajó, recently described in a book "Feudal Island" by Holdbridge. Also in the swarms of semi-wild cattle and water buffalo which we could see on the banks. Then we flew across a corner of French Guiana. The

pilot

pilot pointed out some of the penal settlements. We stopped at Paramaribo, where I saw the celebrated four-eyed fish. I refused to believe it until I had one in my hand: two eyes up in the water and two eyes down in the water. Arrived in Trinidad in the middle of the afternoon; was met by the Consul and the Governor's aide. I stayed at Government House with the British Governor, Sir Hubert Young, only recently arrived. He drove me around to see the sights. The Governor talked most entertainingly of his experience in the Near East with Lawrence of Arabia and other Near Eastern personages as well as of his more recent experience as Governor of Rhodesia. The Governor had a dinner party with local celebrities in the evening. Left next morning, again at the

crack

crack of dawn, this time in a land plane for Venezuela.

For a year and a half in Brazil I had been trying to learn Portuguese. I found that my knowledge of Spanish was a drawback and I had pushed it into the background. I had pushed it so thoroughly that I was eventually speaking Portuguese fairly fluently, and Spanish only hesitantly. Our first stop out of Trinidad was at a landing field near the eastern Venezuelan oil fields. We were told we had time for a cigarette. As I left the plane I saw a group of men but didn't know them so walked another way. They came up to me. They were from the oil fields, local managers, etc., and with them was the

President

President of the Venezuelan State in which the fields are located. I had to pull myself together and speak Spanish: the first five minutes it was hard going, and then all of a sudden it came back with a rush. We next stopped at a little port on the coast, and then at La Guaira, where we again changed planes. The Minister at Caracas, Antonio Gonzalez, came down there to see me, as well as Mr. and Mrs. Paul C. Daniels. Daniels, who was then temporarily assigned at the Legation at Caracas, was assigned to come to my Embassy. I had a chat with them for about an hour, then off in the new plane. We stopped at Coro and Maracaibo, where our Consul came out to see me, and then on to Barranquilla. At Barranquilla, I

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was met by local officials, our Consul, and my old friend Captain Flanagan, President of the Andean National Corporation. Stayed the night at Barranquilla in the new hotel and had dinner with the Consul. Flew next morning to Bogotá, this time in less than two hours and a half.

I found Bogotá improved and expanded. A lot of building had been going on, especially in new residential sections, on the ground that I knew as farm land and where I had ridden horseback before. Bogotá was packed with people because, in addition to the inauguration of the new President, they were celebrating the Four Hundredth Anniversary of the founding of the City of Bogotá.

On my arrival at Bogotá, I was pleased to find, in addition to the official representatives, a crowd

crowd of my old friends to meet me, President

including the Lanier family,

Lopez' brother-in-law, Dr. Miguel Lopez, Colombian

Ambassador at Washington, took charge of me and

was extremely kind to me during my stay. I had

the usual military and diplomatic aides; a

Colonel from the Army and a Secretary from the

Foreign Office. The eight days of my stay were

filled with receptions, dinners, luncheons, teas.

The President gave a ball at his Palace and there

was a costume ball at the National Theater, etc.

There was a Four Hundredth Anniversary Mass planned

on the Cathedral Plaza at the spot where the

first Mass in Bogotá was held four hundred years

before; adequate arrangements had been made and

there were thousands of people there, with a choir

of a thousand or more voices. It was bitterly

cold

cold and pouring rain. We all got wet and before the Mass was over, nine-tenths of the people had fled. All of the principal countries had Special Embassies: one member of the British Embassy was Sir Thomas Holden, well-known at Washington. Three of our Flying Fortresses came down to help me, and their twenty or more officers made my suite an imposing one, as I had also the Chargé d'Affaires, two Secretaries of Legation, and a Naval Attaché.

I saw a lot of old friends: the Sampers, Uruetas, and Davilas, and in the American Colony the Grangers (Singer Sewing Machine); the Dodsons (Standard Oil); and Beviers (Rockefeller Foundation). My good friend Captain Flanagan was there for the festivities.

I have a record in the way of presenting credentials in one place: three times at Bogotá: first, when I presented my letters as Minister; second, as Special Ambassador for the inauguration of President Olaya Herrera; and third, as Special Ambassador for the inauguration of President Eduardo Santos.

One of the things that pleased me most about my Bogotá trip was that the shoe-blacks on the corners and the servants in the hotel all greeted me very warmly.

In Bogotá I saw my old friend Señora de Olaya, the widow of my late friend former President Olaya Herrera.

Among other things, we attended the inauguration of the new Bogotá stadium, as well as the inauguration

inauguration of inter-American athletic games.

President López had me, his brother-in-law Miguel López, and the Commander of our Flying Fortresses with him in his box.

Flew back from Bogotá to Barranquilla and struck the worst storm I have experienced flying. Was thoroughly frightened for about a half-hour; but when we came out of the storm the remainder of the journey was peaceful and serene. We passed the night in Barranquilla, had dinner with the Foleys, prominent in the American colony. The plane was delayed next morning in leaving and got only as far as La Guaira. Passed the night at the hotel at nearby Macuto and had dinner with the Vice Consul. Then next day on to Trinidad.

Had

Had four restful days at Trinidad. Stayed with Claude H. Halls, Consul there, who had a pleasant Trinidadian house. Other parties. They took me out to the oil fields to see the asphalt lake which was a disappointment to me; it isn't a lake; we walked across it; occasionally there is a soft spot. Saw them digging the asphalt out and putting it in cars on rails which come across the lake itself; and the lake is not inexhaustible as I had been told; there is probably a supply for fifty years. The Governor took me out for an all day picnic at a nearby small island. We spent most of the day in the water. Had an excellent picnic luncheon.

Then back by way (again) of Dutch Guiana, Pará, Recife. At each stop again was met by the

officials

officials and hospitably entertained. Again stayed with the Walmsleys at Recife.

At Recife the Governor took me out to see Olinda with its groups of old buildings, some dating from the last years of the 16th century, almost all colored a warm apricot color, standing amidst groves of mango jockfruit trees, and royal palms.

The Franciscan Monastery is beautiful; in the corridor leading to the sacristy are masses of pictorial ~~16~~elft blue tiles, with subjects taken from the Scriptures or the lives of the Saints. The sacristy has quantities of exquisitely carved jacarandá furniture.