

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Cotton, Missions and Banking**

Cotton and more cotton – cotton in the fields, cotton on trucks and cotton in bales as well as huge cotton gins, have been our interest for many miles in Southern California Arizona and Texas. In many of the fields the downy substance obtained from the cotton plant is still being picked by hand but in many more the huge new vacuum automatic pickers are used.

As we motored on by the Salton Sea we noticed the old water line along the side of jagged hills to the right of the highway, as we had been told to do by Commander R.R. Lukens of Riverside, who had been our host the previous night. We were then 35 feet below sea level. Possibly hundreds of years before this date the Sea had reached even beyond the line which we could easily follow for several miles. Now the shore line is several miles from the ancient water level we were following. Incidentally, if we may be permitted to inject a sour note into this otherwise delightful journey, we could not help but regret that our American motoring public drink millions of cans of beer which litter up the highway from coast to coast!

Arizona has one thing in common with Monterey. Historically Arizona covers three distinct periods – the Indian supremacy, the Spanish occupation, and the American period. Father Eusebio Francisco Kino, a Jesuit priest left the first enduring evidences of Spanish civilization in Arizona, when he founded missions throughout the state. Arizona is the youngest of the nation's states. It was organized as a territory in 1863 and admitted to the Union in 1912.

Monterey has flown three flags from the Old Custom House – Spanish, Mexican, and the United States, but there was also the Indian supremacy before the coming of the Spaniards for even though small in number, the Indian population played a distinct part in history.

Yuma is only 200 feet above sea level. The Franciscan priest, Francisco Garces, founded the first mission here in 1780, but the following year Garces and all the inmates of the mission were massacred in the last major outbreak of the Yuma Indians. Fort Yuma was established and garrisoned in 1856.

We crossed the All-American Canal several times. It carries water from the Colorado River to irrigate the

vast acreages of the Imperial and Coachella valleys of California. It also irrigates a part of Mexico. The canal, we learn, is 200 feet wide and 22 feet deep.

We want to tell our readers about the very modern bank we were privileged to visit in Tucson, where we were the house guests of Mrs. Jean Serrano, former owner of Casa Soberanes in Monterey. The Valley National Bank, a pioneer of the southwest, wholeheartedly subscribes to the theory that a bank must do even more than keep pace with its community. The board of directors felt when they opened their third branch in a residential community, that they should adapt it to both its surroundings and its clientele.

The decorator conceived the idea of an informal garden entrance for the "carriage trade," a garden room, with floral wallpapers, roman brick columns, Audubon bird prints, sunlit colors and lovely French Provincial furniture. This bank is the talk of the town.

To begin with there is wall-to-wall carpeting throughout the foyer, main lobby and offices, eliminating the noise, clatter and general appearance of a public building. It is a delight to the customers and a joy to those who are employed there.