

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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A Visit to Mexico

We have returned from two delightful weeks spent in Old Mexico. This trip was made down the west coast from Nogales as far south as Navojoa and Alamos, stopping at Hermosillo as we motored toward the Gulf of California and Guaymas.

We did not find the scenery as intriguing as the previous trip to Mexico City by way of Laredo and Monterrey, nor as was the return journey through Guadalajara, Durango and Chihuahua, but the native communities were just as interesting and different in architecture, agriculture and the native population as their sister cities in the interior.

Crossing from Nogales, Ariz., into Nogales, Mexico, is a simple matter if the traveler has already procured a tourist card which is valid for a single visit to Mexico not to exceed six months. We got ours in Tucson. The cost of the card is \$3 U.S. currency paid to the Mexican consul in the United States. Evidence of citizenship is asked for at the time of application, and this must be carried into Mexico. We were not asked for vaccination certificate upon entering but upon our return we were asked to show such evidence. Many persons are required to submit to vaccination before they are allowed to cross the line, if they do not have papers to show that they have been vaccinated within the past three years. It is also necessary to have a car permit and it is advisable to take out insurance upon the automobile.

We changed our money in Nogales before we crossed the border. The present rate of exchange is 12.50 pesos to \$1 in our money, so the reader can imagine the amount of paper one receives for \$1.

It is very amusing to see all foreigners carrying a yellow card, upon which is printed the exchange, as they shop, and they are all shopping, we assure you. On most of these cards are also other items which are extremely helpful to the tourist, namely: drawings of the Mexican road signs, with English and Spanish meanings; a map of the state indicating the roads and cities; mileage, postal rates, liters to gallons of gasoline, weights and measurements.

After going through all the red-tape at Nogales, we motored happily away at 11 o'clock on the morning of

Nov. 4. Such long roads without a curve or a turn! The paving is excellent and the roads sufficiently wide in all places from Nogales to Navojoa – in fact the All-American races are to be driven over this road next year, when it is expected that it will be completed to Mexico City.

Hermosillo was our stopping place that night. We picked La Siesta motel, which is owned and managed by E.A. Porter, an American. En route we had stopped in the quiet little town of Magdalena – only 55 miles from the border – where everything is green and dustless. The tidy, dirt streets are sprinkled continually, and irrigated farmlands blanket the hills. We were told that a one-day trip from this interesting town would take us to the famous five Father Kino missions, built in the late 1600's by the Jesuit priest, but time did not permit for such a pleasure. We did see the Mission San Francisco Xavier, built by him in 1690, which is the mecca for the hundreds who flock in each October for the St. Francis fiesta.

We cannot leave Magdalena without telling our readers of a "Los Tamboros," a perfect little eating place at 141 Av. Obregon. It had been recommended to us and we were delighted with everything that we saw and ate there. It is owned and operated by an American, Jack Drum, and his charming wife, Anita Moreno Drum, who have included their young son in the three colorful drums of various sizes, which hang above the entrance doorway. A tempting luscious big turkey was being prepared for the Rotary meeting that noon, along with other good looking food.

Fifteen miles further on we entered the small town of Santa Ana, a typical Mexican agricultural community. Of most interest to us was the fact that here was started the most successful expedition to establish the San Carlos Mission and colony here in Monterey, Calif.