

Former Franklin Resident Writes To Tell of Brazil and Its People

To the Editor: I have finally found the time to write the "long" letter I've intended to do so for such a long time. To begin with, our family certainly enjoys receiving and devouring all the news in The Eccentric we receive. Although it averages six weeks after publishing date, in arriving, it is still good reading. In fact, we have met other folks down here who formerly lived in Franklin, and they too enjoy reading it. So you can see that the circulation of The Eccentric is a bit "international."

OUR FAMILY has been here about seven months now and little by little we are obtaining a better focus on things. I had previously been with the central manufacturing staff of the Ford Motor company until December of last year and have accomplished some very interesting jobs for them, but decided taking over my present assignment offered a real challenge.

The explains why we are in Brazil, working for the Willys-Overland Do Brazil company. My job as manager of the industrial development department of the company has been tremendously rewarding in many ways. In particular have been the experiences of assisting our suppliers, experiences which leave one much more humbler for the effort.

I HAVE FOUND the shops where the only real equipment the man had was his indomitable will to succeed. When you see the great obstacles and limitations which face industry in this part of the world, you quickly appreciate how "easy" things are in the good old USA.

Almost too easy, to the point where the person is spoiled, or very nearly so. Willys-Overland Do Brazil manufactures the Jeep, the Rural (a station wagon) and this month we will be building our first Dauphine passenger car, with another Willys Aero passenger car later on in the year. The Dauphine is one of the cars of the French Renault line and is being built here under a license agreement.

WILLYS-OVERLAND Do Brazil is the largest producer of automotive vehicles in Brazil and by far the largest one with the greatest percentage of the product produced "national." Although the Ford and General Motors have operations here, they have limited the scope of their activity. Now to give you a little of the facts and fiction about Sao Paulo, mostly facts, I hope. To begin with, Sao Paulo is a large city, estimated at 3 1/2 to 4 million people. It is crowding Rio de Janeiro for the distinction of being the biggest city in Brazil. Sao Paulo is the capital of the state of Sao Paulo, there being 20 states in the Republic of Brazil. The language is Portuguese, sim-



Helen (dark bathing suit) and Phyllis Collins stand before Neptune in preparation for their crossing of the equator on the trip to Brazil. The two girls passed their initiation successfully and are now considered full-fledged voyagers.

ilar to Spanish with a flavor of French.

It is a very cosmopolitan city with 35 different countries having consulate representation here.

FROM ALL APPEARANCES, Sao Paulo has passed the problem of racial discrimination. On every hand one sees broad mixtures of both nationalities and races, with predominant traces of the Negro and some evidence of the Oriental and Indian.

Brief histories I have read of Brazil, speaks of it as a nation made up of three races, the white, Negro, and Indian. Brazil, and Sao Paulo in particular, seems to be a place of contrasts. On one hand there is luxurious living, and on the other there is extreme need.

In many respects, the country is more advanced, from a liberal point of view, than the USA. This particularly true of certain laws affecting labor. IT APPEARS that the past few years has seen the start of great industrial growth. A growth that highlights the need for expanded public services, utilities, educational facilities, etc. Although the country is primarily Catholic, the people do not seem to be Catholic in heart and in spirit. I'm sure the Pope in Rome would be quite disturbed if he got a "man-on-the-street" opinion here. They say there is religious free-

cleaning crew about an hour or so to clean up the debris and leftover.

Then there is the open-air flower markets with their dazzling array of flowers. Fifty to one hundred cruzeiros will get you a beautiful large bouquet of flowers. This means 20¢ to 70¢ USA.

THERE ARE A variety of restaurants in Sao Paulo. The prices are reasonable and the food is good to excellent. Drinks are low to high-priced.

Beer (and it is good) comes in liter-sized bottles. There is a wide variety of brandies, gins, rums and wines. Scotch whiskey is plentiful but about 60 per cent higher priced than at home.

By North American standards, clothes are not too satisfactory. Zippers on men's suits are still uncommon. The cut of the style is not as "full" as in the USA.

ON THE OTHER hand, the local female dresses quite attractively. To begin with, she is "fuller blown" than her North American cousin. Somehow or other she seems to have learned to "accentuate the positive" in a manner which keeps the observer interested.

To meet the competition, the North American cousin who is visiting here or otherwise, sheds her skirt. The traffic situation here is really something. There is very little respect for traffic regulations. Ignoring traffic lights, failing to stop at street crossings, driving on the wrong side of the street, etc. are very very common practices.

APPROXIMATELY one out of every four cars is a taxi. This is a conventional 4-door sedan with a taxi-meter mounted behind the windshield. There is no fleet of taxis such as "Checker" or "Yellow." Each taxi is owned by a different individual.

A good many cars here are World War II with very few newer than 1955 models. There are a great variety of European makes.

Traffic tickets are payable when you apply for your new license each year. I suppose it comes as a surprise to find out you have traffic tickets which you didn't know about.

YOU SEE, the traffic policeman doesn't bother to stop you, but writes a ticket when he sees you violating some regulations.

Telephones here in Sao Paulo are not common. The story goes that when a youngster is born, his parents place his name on the list of a telephone to assure that when he grows up and gets married, he will have a telephone. Although the monthly charge is reasonable, the initial cost can run around \$60 US dollars. It isn't just a case of price, there are just aren't enough phones available. All right, I'm sure you'll have a lot to be desired.

ALTHOUGH To the average North American, there is a general indifference to dirt in some of the habits here. The people are good, they are friendly, they have very much to learn from the North American and European, they want to see Brazil grow and prosper, they want to take their place "in the sun." But still there is a feeling that what you put off today can be done tomorrow. It is this that tries your patience. We had a very nice visit from Dr. W. Glen Harris, our minister from the First Presbyterian church of Birmingham, while he was attending the World Alliance. It was good to see an old friend.

WE DO MISS our many friends in Birmingham but try to say an occasional hello through letters and postcards. We did have the pleasure of visiting the Henry McQueen (Henry road, Birmingham) and the Hollifields, (Franklin). These folks were friends of ours back in Birmingham and it was good to look them up when we came down. Both these families have now returned home. Of course there are still others with Ford and GM who came down from the States and who we had known before our assignment here.

Judging from re-reading my letter, it look like I'm beginning to ramble a little too much so I guess it's time to sign off. Before I do, I want to mention that we will send some pictures taken aboard the boat on which Betty and the children sailed on their trip to Brazil. Because local mail is not entirely reliable, we will send the pictures by a friend who is returning very soon.

Willys-Overland Do Brazil
HARRY COLLINS
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Ticklers *By George*

"So here you are . . . Where's your driver's license?"

Dedicate New Matus Field

Viewing the dedication monument for the Edwin A. Matus Memorial Athletic field are (from left) Mr. and Mrs. Kalman Matus, parents of the deceased lieutenant, Mrs. Betty Matus, his widow, and Brigadier General Ronald D. Salmon, commanding general, MCAS, El Toro. The field was dedi-

ated to the memory of Lt. Matus for his devotion and work to further the athletic program of the Marine Corps air facility. The field became a reality largely through his efforts. He died in a helicopter accident on May 20 of this year.

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