

# Mexico Independent

Entered in the Post Office at Mexico, N. Y., as second class matter.

R. Austin Backus, Editor and Publisher  
Edwin M. Huestis, Associate Editor, Phone 133-M  
Independent Office, Phone 35-W

TERMS: One Year, \$2.00 Six Months, \$1.00 Three Months, \$.60  
Payable in Advance  
All subscriptions discontinued at the expiration of the time paid for, or continued at the option of the publisher. The acceptance of a paper from the post office by a subscriber when not paid in advance is considered a bona fide promise of payment for the time the subscriber's address until all arrearages have been paid.

Foreign Advertising Representative: The American Press Association



MEXICO, NEW YORK, THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 1935

## Letter of Interest

June 2, 1935  
Somewhere enroute to Seattle,  
Wash., in the state of  
Montana

Dear Readers of The Independent:  
I promised Mr. Huestis of the Independent that I would write a few lines about my trip which I am now making through to Seattle, Wash., as a delegate to the National Holstein-Friesian Association Convention.

I am sure that one may much better comprehend and appreciate the greatness of our United States after they board a train and start out of these big states of ours. Cross of Thursday in the evening of Thursday, Memorial Day, we arrived the next forenoon in Chicago. Leaving that night aboard a special section of the Empire Builder over that railroad built by J. J. Hill, stretching its way through plains, over mountains, wilderness, and out over forest to the great northwest . . . a distance of 2200 miles from Chicago to Seattle. This special train on which I am riding, consists of 14 cars, 9 Pullmans, a buffet car, two diners, and two observation cars, and a parlor car. There are people aboard from all of the states east of Chicago, and quite a good many of the middle west states. Some of the delegates are driving through by auto . . . woe is he who attempts these dirt main roads out through this country, just freshly rained on . . . lots of curves, and real slow going . . . all the way through this state of Montana, and I understand the same through the part of Idaho which we are about to touch, as we wend our way along into the state of Washington.

The greater part yesterday was spent in crossing first that great state of Minnesota, through the famous Red River Valley where potatoes grow so luxuriantly, and where grains produce easily 100 bushel of wheat to the acre. Soon we passed into North Dakota, and into a much different country . . . barren . . . level as far as the eye could scan, just flat country . . . now and then a little home . . . sheds of barns, and sheer attempts to farm one of the poorer sections of our country. As night overtook us we were about to enter the "bad lands," way in the northern part of North Dakota, right up to the border of Canada. Here it was that many of the most horrible massacres by the Indians were fought in earlier years. Today, as I was marveling at the size of Montana, someone said that it was four times as large as the state of Ohio, and yet its population was only that of the one Ohio City of Columbus. And that is the impression you get. There is lots of land, but few people. Each man has a section of land all his own. I wonder how they get doctors when they need them . . . how they educate their families, although I did see some schools in the towns along the way. Villages are very small, and there are miles and miles between each town of any size. Lumber seems to be very scarce, as a result homes are one story, mostly unpainted, two or three room houses, with sheds for barns to store the car, and corrals for the cattle. Noticed many large sheep ranches with the shepherd tending with his dog . . . some used a bronco, others were on foot.

When I awoke this morning, raised the curtain by my berth and looked out, I saw far across the plains three peaks, my first view of the Rockies. Tipped with snow, they stood there like silent sentinels guarding the great miles and miles of land over which they seemed to be the masters . . . I was told they were some 100 miles away, and yet they seemed almost within walking distance. To-day has brought us closer to these great mountains, and many ranges have since put in an appearance near the train. I am glad that my job is not to attempt a description of the beautiful scenery through

which we have passed today. Glacier park with its altitude of 8213 feet (almost a mile) so high some of the passengers complained of feeling ill, is a spot of beauty. Yet what a place to spend a vacation, if you want to really get away from everything . . . where it is really quiet . . . where you can hire a guide, a horse, put on riding suits, take a tent and start out to fish, ride and breathe the air of this grand country. I can think of many who will read these lines that would really get a lot of pleasure out of this country where the nights are cold, the days balmy, and the fish plentiful. Amusements are not artificial here. Nature provides the amusements . . . the only indication I saw of any artificial amusement was at Shelby, Montana this forenoon, where the Dempsey-Gibbons fight took place a few years ago, and where in this country they ever found people enough to make this a paying fight I cannot fathom . . . just a little town, not a paved street, nor a sidewalk.

In my Pullman across the aisle sleeps at night a gentleman from Texas. Next to me is Prof. Brownell of Cornell University and next Prof. W. W. Yapp of the Illinois University. In another section of the car is the manager of the Maytag Farms at Newton, Iowa. Lectures are given on the train for those who wish to listen, radios bring music from the outside world. I noticed the programs from St. Paul seemed to be the most popular.

Rain seems to have been very plentiful, and Prof. Yapp of Illinois tells me that during the first 20 days of May they had 16 days of rainy weather, almost direct opposite to our section.

You will be interested in a two hour conversation which I had yesterday with the head of a large chain of grocery stores, who is in our party. He has 1516 stores through the middle western states, and I asked him about the NRA. He tells me that he is going to keep up his wages to the hundreds of people that he employs, and that if others will do the same there should not be anything to worry about . . . although I am sorry to note that some of the textile factories, and others have already been quick to cut the wages of their help. All and all, however, the business men on this train seem to think that the sooner we get the props out and get started on a solid foundation the sooner we will have some real prosperity.

The farther west we go, however, the more I feel that New York state is still a pretty good old state . . . but someone good pioneer, someone must forsake the pleasures of living in a thickly populated section with its beautiful flowers, cities, music, art, and what not . . . and come out here to cut the timber of western Montana, and Washington, grow the grains in the Dakotas and Minnesota, tend the sheep and herd the beef cattle.

Next week I will try and tell you something about Seattle, and the route which I will traverse on my return home.

R. Austin Backus, Editor

## VERMILLION

June 3—Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell Littlefield of Syracuse are the happy parents of an 8 pound boy, born at the hospital there Tuesday, May 28th. Mrs. Littlefield is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Milo Bladden of this place.

Willis Raymond, who had an appendix operation in Fulton hospital, is convalescing nicely at the home of his brother Wesley Raymond, at Fulton. His father, Perry Raymond, spent Sunday there with him.

Mrs. Hazel Hoteling and daughter Alice and Sydney Lucas, spent Thursday in Phoenix.

Walter Knight, who has been home sick with the measles, has returned to his work at Cameron Loomis'.

## Rippling Waters

### OLD DOGS AND NEW TRICKS

One has but to note the well beaten path through the woods to understand how hard it is for man to attempt anything new. We are about as afraid to change as we are of scarlet fever. We do plenty of complaining about familiar inconveniences, but we would rather endure them a thousand years than desert them for a new set of conditions.

I have a friend never in Fly Summit who has down adjusted himself to the idea of automobiles. While they tear by his quaint farmhouse, hidden behind solemn pine trees, leaving a cloud of dust by day and a pillar of fire by night he leans on his stout hickory staff and curses the day that gave them birth. One can only feel sorry for him, for he is sensing the true condition of things that the old order, so friendly and familiar to him, is passing and a new and unfamiliar order is being born.

But whether we will or not we cannot stay change. Change is the only thing that is unchangeable, the one thing upon which you may depend.

With hungry eyes we scan the past seeking the life which yesterday was so dear. With a wistful note we sing, "There's an Old Spinning Wheel in the Parlor," and "When Mother Played the Organ and Father Sang a Hymn," but I wonder if we would actually care to return to those familiar days? How many of us who love the dear old days would really want to set up nights running a spinning wheel or manipulating the loom to produce the material for a pair of home spun pants?

When you go to the city to purchase a new musical instrument for the home do you hunt up an old fashioned Estey organ, or do you price a fine baby-grand piano?

The average church is a cemetery for discarded organs, donated by people who are full of sentiment for the past. They don't want them, and yet they can't destroy them or throw them away. Suddenly they are seized with the happy thought that they would be an adornment to the dear old church.

My first parsonage had only three articles of furniture, and they were all organs, donated by women who loved the dear old days, but who had purchased nice new player pianos.

I hear lots of people declare that the automobile is the curse of the nation, but I don't notice them buying a horse and buggy. They forget the inconvenience of walking a mile to the pasture after a horse and following him two more miles around the field with a halter in one hand and a pan of oats in the other, saying with one breath, "come here nice horsey" and with the next calling him names which would hardly become the old fashioned parlor.

It isn't so nice to call on your best girl covered with red horse hair, and smelling like a livery stable.

Others pine for the good old days when everything was cured by a drink of catnip tea. For some reason they forgot the other concoctions which grandmothers poured down our throats, and the more lamentable fact that appendicitis was called inflammation of the bowels and usually ended unfavorably to the patient.

I do not think we would so fear change if we could know where our journey was going to terminate. When our boat is out adrift from the familiar shore, we don't know whether it will finally reach some fringed isle or smash into the rocks and lie a shattered mass washed by the sea. By faith in God we can, with a degree of relief, remember that we did not construct this universe and that a universe that could produce our civilization out of chaos can rub out the mistaken lines and construct a better one.

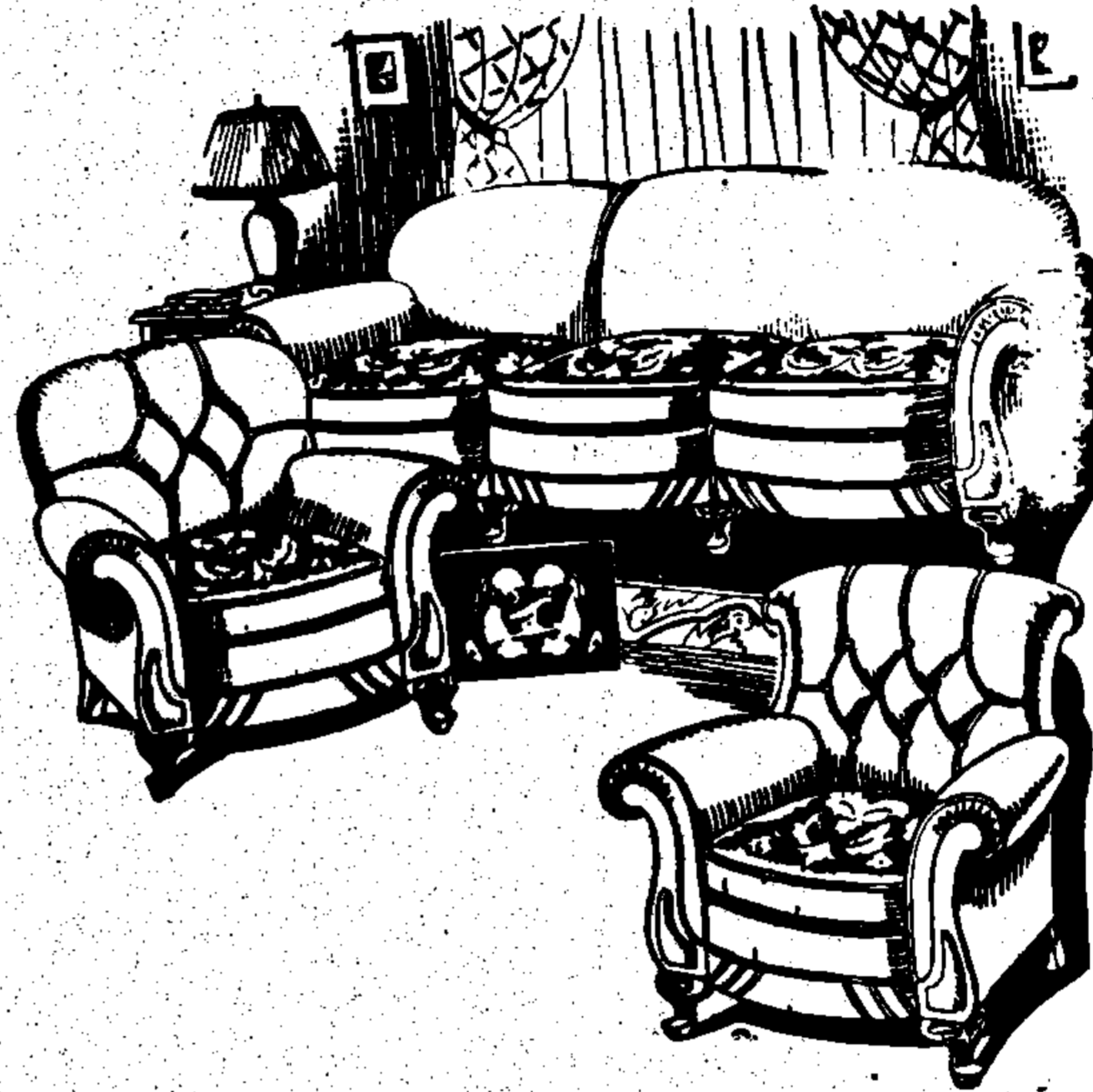
And now we find that the NRA is unconstitutional. It would be terrible to tinker with the sacred constitution in favor of the laboring family, though if the eighteenth amendment interfered with the machinations of the saloons and brewers it ought to be changed at once. We have made lots of fun of the NRA, but lots of families are getting bread and butter through it. If it failed, it is because we were too afraid to see that the dog eat dog, sweatshop, and infant labor methods belonged to the past, to the days when the alchemist concocted a brew from toads and rats and human blood to make synthetic gold. The NRA was a good thing, but if Roosevelt poses the

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