

Monterrey, Mexico

Feb. 19, 1946

Dear Abe;

Drove down from Laredo this morning. We got our money changed from American to Mexican yesterday. I had fifteen dollars changed. Received 72 pesos. Had the car insured for five days, three dollars. It cost me three dollars, no, three pesos, to take the car through the Mexican customs and it cost each of us two pesos and twenty cents in American money. We have managed quite well so far.

Last night we stayed in Laredo. We arrived there Sunday afternoon about four o'clock. We hadn't hurried because we had called down on Friday evening and made reservations. We were promised two rooms, one with twin beds for Sue and I. When we arrived we found that she had saved only one room for us. It had two double beds. So I said no, that would not do. So she told us that we should try and find some other place and that she would hold that room for us until we called her. So we found two rooms with only a curtain between, it was somewhat better but the beds were bumpy. Carmal snores and Sue snores and between the two of them I have lost one night's sleep. You can see why I wouldn't want two beds in one room. Well, the next morning we found a nice place with two rooms and each room with bath. Very clean, beautiful yard. I have written you a card that has the picture of our cabin on it but I forgot to mail it this A.M. so you will get it with this letter. Mr. Dobbs who owns the place told us that he was from New York. He said by all means we should see Mexico City. He recommended these courts at which we are staying tonight. They are very lovely, palm trees and the mountains in the distance. He also told us to stop at Sanborns for food while here as all the Americans stop there. We did just that and found it a very pretty place. Mexican girls in custom waited tables. It was a large room with booths around the outside wall, and across the aisle tables for four. These tables were around a square which held other tables, above these center tables the ceiling was of glass brick.

After eating we drove around the town, no we walked first, bought ourselves some Kleenex, cost 1 peso and 20 centavos. I think that you would get along very nicely down here as you already know how to count in Italian which seems to be about the same as Spanish. The clerk told me to say "bentle" instead of twenty. Every one seems quite nice. Every one is selling things down here, old men with their dirty looking hands selling candy, wrapped and unwrapped, little boys selling things in baskets, little girls selling laces and sweaters etc. We didn't buy anything from them. They certainly can spot the tourist. As soon as I parked the car to go into Sanborns the fat Mexican across the narrow street called to me and said, "You're all right, you're all right." Then I thoughtlessly opened my door to step out and he called to me to watch it. The street is narrow and a car was coming fast, I got back in a hurry of course I said, "Thank you". He came across the street and invited

us in to have a little appetizer, "You know," he said, "just a little something to drink before you have your meal." "Oh no," I said, "we don't drink, you're very kind, but we wouldn't think of it." "Alright, alright," he said, "that's alright," I also have a very nice jewelry store over there where you can buy souvenirs." We thanked him again and told him we would remember, but we forgot. After we had walked around for awhile we went back to the car and rode around the residential section. Down town the streets are ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ almost all narrow, there are of necessity, a great many one way streets. I managed to get on several going the wrong way. The Mexicans smile at you and point the other way, and we smile at them and turn off on the first street we come to only to find we are on another one way street and again we are going the wrong way. So we smile some more and finally get on the street going the right way. They all honk their horns. I always have to look around to see what I am doing wrong, but I have found that they just honk on general principles, we are getting quite used to it now. As we drove along we could look through the open doors of some of the homes and see the patios which were very colorful. They all had ferns flowers and potted plants. Some were clean and lovely and some were dirty. The homes in the nicer part of town are beautiful, very large, clean looking. We really find our way around beautifully. Carmal and Clarice walked over to a little cafe near the courts here and bought a half dozen doughnuts. They were delicious. Carmal and I made ourselves a cup of NesCafe out of the hot water from the faucet. We had coffee and toast for breakfast (no good) (had to eat on the way down here) as we were in a hurry to get through the customs) ate our dinner at Sanborns at 2:30, bought tangerines, ate all those, they were very sweet, I peeled them and the girls ~~at~~ lifted the fruit out of the peeling with out touching the outside. Then I scrubbed good in hot water and soap and ate the inside of mine. We are very careful about the food. Sue had coke for breakfast, Sanborns had pasturized milk.

I guess that this will about all for now. I'm sleepy and very tired. I have done all the driving so far. Carmal really doesn't have much get up, just between you and I. She needs somebody to think for her. Either Clarice or I have to do all the calling about places. we have to take care of the luggage getting in the car etc. She is sure slow motion. but I'm having a grand time. Do not know what we will do tomorrow.

much love, say "hello" to ~~the~~ Jan and Phil for me. Better yet give them a kiss. Sure wish you could all be along. We must all come down next year.

Love and kisses

Ruth

P.S. Haven't seen
a paper for a few days. Oh! forgot to tell you -
Hainwright walked right behind ^{us} me as we
were leaving over the counter looking at charms at
Jokers in San Antonio. A clerk told us so ^{Clarice Sue & I} we quickly
followed him & were able to get a good look - saw him
get in his car. Love Ruth.