

# The University of Chicago

Department of Sociology and Anthropology

ALBION W. SMALL  
ELLSWORTH FARIS  
ROBERT E. PARK  
ERNEST W. BURGESS  
FAY-COOPER COLE  
EDWARD SAPIR  
FLOYD N. HOUSE

May 21, 1927.

My dear Mr. Rogers:

For several reasons I do not think it advisable for me to come to New York on the 28th.

1. I am working very hard at the present time putting the finishing touches on my book on social psychology which will probably be published by the University of Chicago Press this summer. I feel that I would like to get this out of the way before my work with the Institute formally begins. I am not sure that it is much of a contribution to learning, but after all a book is a book and it is barely possible that its publication may redound indirectly to the benefit of the Institute.

2. Whereas I am very anxious to talk with Mr. Baker, I feel that if I could come at a time when I might be able to see one or two other people as well, that the money would be spent to better advantage. For example, I would like to have another talk with Tannenbaum and no doubt there are others in New York that Mr. Baker would pass me along to. By coming at this time I would barely have time to talk to Baker himself - I could not leave here until Friday night and would have to start back Sunday at noon.

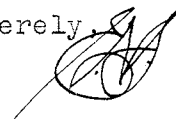
Wherefore, Sir, I suggest that it would, providing that Mr. Baker would still be available at that time, much better for me to wait a couple of weeks and come up on June 15th. At this time the term will be over here and I will be able to stay as long as may be necessary.

Your decision concerning Douglas I accept, as you say, without any great mental struggle. It was just a possibility which I thought I would pass along to you for what it was worth.

Bruce's letters I find very stimulating and suggestive. I might even go so far as to say that I am a little envious of the quality of his stuff and am anxious to begin to measure my own abilities against his.

If I do not hear from you to the contrary, in a few days I will write to Mr. Baker requesting an interview on June 15th or thereabouts.

Very Sincerely,



ENS-WSR..10

May 31st, 1927.

Dear Simpson:

I am just back at my desk after having attended a meeting of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers at White Sulphur Springs. I acknowledge your letter of May 21st and the telegram sent to me at the Cosmos Club in Washington.

Mr. Baker's secretary informs me that Mr. Baker will be in New York until the early part of July, so I take it that it will be possible for you to arrange an interview for almost any time that will be convenient to you.

According to present plans, John and his father sail for this country June 8th on the Olympic and should arrive here either the 14th or 15th. I plan to be here at that time.

In working out a schedule, please keep in mind the desirability of your being in Chicago so as to help John get his seminar underway. On what date do his activities at the university begin?

WSR/FC

Sincerely yours,

WSR-ENS..11

June 8th, 1927

Dear Simpson:

In a letter received a day or two ago from Mr. Axelson in regard to your life insurance, ~~he~~ casually observed that you had informed him I expected to be in Chicago next week. I do not know where you got this idea. I certainly have no intention of going to Chicago in the near future, if I can possibly avoid doing so. Have you as yet made an appointment with George Barry Baker?

John is due here next Tuesday and I am still trying to find out the precise date on which he is expected to report at the university.

As I think I wrote you several months ago, Admiral Grayson, Chief of the United States Naval Dispensary, Washington, promised to prepare for me something on the medical questions we discussed. I have prodded him several times. Last Saturday he expressed amazement that I had not heard from him. Now I have a letter in which he sends me the material that I am enclosing. After all the conversation and promises, the final result is pathetic. However, it is all I have as a result of my efforts.

I am also enclosing a copy of a letter from Hopper to Mr. Simms, the foreign editor of the Scripps-Howard newspapers. When you have gone over it, please turn it over to "Sam" Harper.

Best greetings,

WSR/FC  
encls.

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Received at

1927 JUN 10 AM 10 48

N44 30 BLUE. CHICAGO ILL 10 907A

WLATER S ROGERS.

522 FIFTH AVE.

JOHN DUE HERE JUNE TWENTIETH STOP HAVE RECEIVED NO REPLY  
NO LETTER TO BAKER REQUESTING INTERVIEW JUNE FIFTEENTH  
STOP WILL YOU FIND OUT WHAT IS WRONG AND LET ME KNOW.

SIMPSON.

Charge to the account of \_\_\_\_\_

C R Crane

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

June 10, 1927

Wylor H. Simpson  
Faculty Exchange  
University of Chicago  
Chicago Ill

Letter unreceived Baker see you seventeenth of eighteenth

Rogers

# The University of Chicago

Department of Sociology and Anthropology

ELLSWORTH FARIS  
ROBERT E. PARK  
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FAY-COOPER COLE  
EDWARD SAPIR  
FLOYD N. HOUSE  
EYLER N. SIMPSON  
LOUIS WIRTH

June 12, 1927.

My dear Mr. Rogers:

I am somewhat at a loss to understand why Mr. Baker did not receive my letter. I addressed a letter to him at 42 Broadway, c/o American Relief Administration-the address which you gave me in your letter-something over a week ago. Hereafter in cases of this sort I will make assurance doubly sure by sending you a carbon copy of such letters.

Unless I hear from you to the contrary, I will arrive in New York Thursday, June 16th, at 3 P.M. I hope that it will be convenient for you to have supper with me and tell me something more about Baker before I talk to him the next day.

I found Mr. Axelson very pleasant and efficient. He phoned yesterday to tell me that my physical examination was satisfactory and that the insurance would be put through immediately. And, by the way, his information concerning the possibility of your being in Chicago came from a remark which I made to the effect that on your last trip you had suggested that you might come out with John.

My connection with the University ceases on June 15th. At present we are in the midst of packing and doing all the things that one does when one goes off adventuring at the ends of the earth. Lacking any specific directions from you, I have gone ahead with such matters as typhoid shots, vaccination, etc.

Now that I have seen Mr. Grayson's words of wisdom on how many baths to take in the tropics I do not feel so much the "inadequacy" of my own little investigation which I sent to you some time ago.

Greetings and salutations,



# The University of Chicago

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LOUIS WIRTH

June 21, 1927.

ENS..WSR...1.

My dear Mr. Rogers:

A very pleasant trip home during which John and I became much better acquainted. I have tried to do everything possible to make his stay here pleasant and profitable-including all the things that you suggested. He has, I believe, about 12 students, most of whom are graduates.

I have not written to Mr. Baker concerning the letters which he suggested writing to his friends in Mexico. When I consulted my record of my interview with Mr. Baker I found I had made a note of the fact that he was not sure of the wisdom of writing the letters at this time. Accordingly, I wonder if it would not be better for you to talk to him about the matter before he leaves New York.

These last few days are whirling by in a perfect orgy of final preparations-passports, tickets, trunks, farewells, etc. etc.-all the usual things. I like this sort of thing, but find it difficult in the midst of so much activity to collect my thoughts. When I get to Mexico I am going to withdraw to an exceedingly high and quiet mountain and just sit there and think for about a week. We plan to leave Sunday morning. Until further notice you may address me:

Hotel Ceneve,  
8 Calle Liverpool 133,  
Mexico, City, D.F.  
Mexico.

Enclosed you will find my expense account covering my recent trip to New York and certain incidental expenses incurred in the interest of the Institute during the months of May and April.

I feel like a little boy who has just put on his first pair of long pants and is not quite sure that he will be able to live up to them...I remember the tail end of a song we used to sing in kindergarten: "Good bye, good bye, be always kind and true".



## INTERVIEW

Wythe, George.

Office of Commercial Attaché, Mexico City.

7/1/27.

Believes Mexico to be the most complex country in the world. "You dig and dig and still you do not get to the bottom". The sooner you acquire the "quien sabe" attitude the better.

Warned me against mentioning the name of Gamio when talking to official in the department of Education. Gamio had a run in with the department and was forced to resign. (Wythe was instrumental in getting Gamio his job with the Social Service Research Council).

Thinks that Carleton Beales is a sincere and honest person. Has been a great deal of gossip about the way that Beales treated his wife but Wythe does not believe much in this.

Wythe very much sold on his on work as commercial attaché. Feels that the only hope for international peace and understanding lies in accurate information about economic forces and problems. His office here, altho technically under the embassy, is really a separate show with separate funds. Tries to keep out of the intrigue at the embassy. Will be here at least one more year.

Told him the nature of the work of the Institute and my plans for work here. Approved both. Promised to help me both personally and professionally.



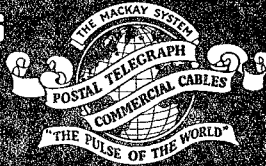
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CLARENCE H. MACKAY, PRESIDENT

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DELIVERY NO.

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MEXICOCITY MEX 1

WALTER J ROGERS

522 5 AVE NEWYORK NY

SATISFACTORILY SETTLED AT GENEVA HOTEL LETTER FOLLOWS SUNDAY

SIMPSON.

1927 JUL 12 AM 12:27

Mexico City, Mexico,  
Hotel Geneve,  
8a Calle Liverpool, 133,  
July 3, 1927.

ENS...WSR..2.

My dear Mr. Rogers:

Our trip down was much more pleasant than we had expected it to be. In fact the only hot and dusty stretch was from St. Louis to San Antonio. The much discussed and dreaded northern desert in Mexico proved to be delightfully cool and of a greenness that was in marked contrast to the parched fields of Texas.

We stopped over one day in San Antonio. I spent an hour or two with Colonel Charles S. Dahl, friend of Mr. Crane's, and one time editor of the San Antonio Light. He proved to be most interesting and helpful-albeit not about Mexico. Indeed, we spent most of the time talking about his experiences in the days when he was connected with the A.P. However, he was able to advise me with reference to what border papers I should take. Specifically he suggested that I take the "Light" (for the Hearst point of view) and the El Paso "Herald".

One of my first concerns here has been to establish my banking connections. After consulting with my friend George Wythe (see below) I opened an account with the Canadian Bank of Commerce. Acting on the advice of one of the directors of the bank, I am keeping the account in Mexican gold rather than in silver, or in American dollars. In this way I can buy Mexican gold each month and thus take advantage of any fluctuations in the rate of exchange. The Canadian Bank of Commerce has a branch office in New York at No. 16 Exchange Place. The easiest way for me to receive my money here will be for you to deposit to my account each month in the above mentioned branch bank a check drawn on the Institute. This will then, of course, be transferred to my credit here in American dollars.

George Wythe, you will perhaps recall, was a fraternity brother of mine in the University of Texas. For the past two years he has been stationed here as Commercial Attaché. He received me most cordially and seemed disposed to help me in every way possible both personally and professionally. Knowing him to be a sincere and honest as well as a discrete person, I felt that, despite his official position, I could afford to quite frankly tell him what I was doing here. Like Baker and others with whom I have talked he was very skeptical about any one being able to do the job in Mexico which the plans of the Institute call for... "I have been in Turkey, Vienna, France, and Africa, but Mexico offers more complex problems than all of them put together. You dig and dig but you never touch bottom".

ENS...WSR..2.

All of which leads me to set down a few of my own impressions after three days spent in "the field". First, let me say that I have been greatly depressed by the realization that I have been ~~greatly~~ overestimating to myself my knowledge of spoken Spanish. I can, of course, manage to get about the city, to order what I want in restaurants etc. (and this partly due to the fact that every third person seems to speak English) but this is far from being able to conduct an intelligent conversation. I am afraid that this will mean that a good part of my summer will have to be spent in just plain ordinary sweating over a grammar with a tutor. On the other hand, I am somewhat comforted by the fact that the newspapers do not seem to offer any difficulties that I will not be able to overcome in a few weeks.

The City <sup>is</sup> offers a strange jumble of that which is familiar and that which is foreign. Advertisements for Wrigley's Chewing Gum and Lucky Strike cigarettes, the streets thronged with Fords, Dodges, and Packards, and, yes, even an advertisement for "Grane beauty in the open..." all mark the impress of the Nordic civilization. And yet, the incessant pounding in your ears of the staccato notes of the Mexicanized Spanish, the "sarape" enfolded figures of the barefooted peons with their great hats, the pink and blue houses always and everywhere built of brick and adobe.. all make one acutely aware of the presence of a culture ages old when industrial America was yet to be born. But of this I hope to write much more later on. At present my own feelings and impressions are so mixed that I cannot straighten them out and order them into words.

Our living arrangements leave very little to be desired. For \$25.00 (U.S.) a week we get a very pleasant sitting room, small bed room, and bath. The food is a great improvement over the Quadrangle Club. We will probably stay here for a couple of months or so and then look about for an apartment.

Next week I hope to be able to write less about "me" and more about Mexico.

ENS

Mexico City,D.F.,  
Hotel Geneve,  
8a Calle Liverpool,133,  
July 10,1927.

ENS...WSR..3.

My dear Mr.Rogers:

The papers here during the past week have been filled with articles anent the decline and fall of Mr.Sheffield. For days every scrap of information which could be gathered concerning his movements in the U.S. was given front page space with large headlines.Finally,when his resignation was publicly announced, columns of space were devoted to the recital of this simple fact. Of course,in view of the present somewhat strained relations this display in the papers is not a matter for surprise.

Although I am at the present time,after a week in Mexico,able to do little more than guess at the hidden significance (if any) of Mr.Sheffield's departure for other and happier lands,I am impressed with two points.First:the paucity of any comment either editorially or in the news columns,by the papers themselves concerning the event.On the contrary,both El Universal and El Excelsior(the two morning papers) seem to be at some pains when treating the question of why Mr.Sheffield should resign at this time,or of the significance of his resignation in relation to the foreign policy of the United States,to present only direct quotations from New York or Washington papers.And this morning,the day after the announcement,neither paper carried any editorial comment whatsoever.

On the other hand,one cannot help but note that the papers here are extremely sensitive to the "color" of the news stories or editorials in the American press whenever these touch

upon things Mexican. The front page usually carries one or more complete reprints from American papers. The recent editorial in the New York World on the subject of the present presidential campaign in Mexico, called forth a very pointed editorial rejoinder on the part of El Universal.

Mexico's internal politics, in so far as one may judge from merely reading the press reports, are definitely centering about the presidential campaign. So far nothing very exciting has happened. There are now two main parties in the field: the "Obregonistas" led by General Obregon; and, the "Partido Nacional Anti-rreeleccionista" led by Generals Seranno and Gomez. Both groups are at present busy "stumping" the provinces. The central issue is implied in the name of the second party - anti-rreelection.

The Seranno and Gomez party gave to the press on July 2nd a full page announcement of its platform. However, neither from a careful reading of this, nor from a perusal of the various speeches made by the candidates, can I find any clear-cut declaration of intention concerning what needs must be the two main issues about which any political campaign in Mexico at the present time should turn: foreign investments and the Catholic church. This may be interpreted in several ways. Each party may be trying to force the other to be the first to take a stand on these questions; both parties may be simply following the good American custom of conducting political campaigns without reference to anything that really matters; or, for those really "in the know" here it may simply be taken as a matter of course that Obregon will continue the policies of Calles and that the "Anti-rreeleccionistas" represent the Catholic reaction.

Both parties are loud in their protestations that their only interest is that the presidential succession shall be peaceful. So loud, in fact, that "methinks the lady doth protest too much".

In the interest of getting under way my studies on the present educational developments in Mexico I had a short talk on Friday with Moises Saenz, the present first sub-secretary of education. Unfortunately I found him on the verge of leaving for the United States. He will not return until about the middle of August. However, he promised to see me at that time and suggested certain people in the department of education for me to see in the meantime. I hope that these together with Dr. Pruneda (Rector of the University) and Dr. Montaña (Director of the Summer School) will be able to put me on the trail of the printed sources of information, statistics etc.

This week I heard two lectures on the "Present Tendencies in Mexican Education" which Saenz delivered to the Summer School students. These, as might have been expected, were rather formal and innocuous, but served to give me a fair understanding of the structural aspects of the educational system.

I continue to receive as I go about the city a number of purely "tourist impressions". With some misgiving as to what value you may attach to these intuitive insights, I set them down for what they may be worth.

Last Sunday morning was spent walking about the justly famous Chapultepec Park. The scenic beauty of the place you

will find better described in any of the standard guide book than I can or need do it. And, after all, the people were the real center of our interest. They swarmed about in the warm sunshine in much the same manner as they do in Central Park. Lovers sat in secluded nooks. Young men displayed their physical prowess in row boats. There were family parties with the usual collection of lunch baskets and children. Many stood patiently around a wire-enclosed pavilion listening to one of the local orchestras. (The music, by the way, was excellent and the orchestra, decked out in the native "charro" costume, very colorful.) It was, however, as we walked down the main drive, that we received our clearest impression of what we had more or less sensed before. And that was the marked stratification of the population into those who walked and those who rode. Along the drive there passed in unending succession fine cars filled with what were quite obviously "ladies and gentlemen". While the walks were crowded with what was just as obviously the hoi poli and the proletariat. A motley throng - these on the walk. Oblivious to, and seemingly unenvious of the wealth displayed in the slow-moving cars, bare-footed peons jostled servant girls and shop girls, dressed in pink ~~dresses~~ (beloved hue), with their long flying hair caught back with a single comb. Here, one felt, were two entirely separate worlds and the gulf between them was much wider than the distance from the sidewalk to the street.

~~~~~

I am beginning to realize that one of the hardest parts of my work here will be to have the patience to proceed slowly. It is true that, now that I have a tutor, the language difficulty does

not bulk so large. But at times this week I have been oppressed with the feeling that I am not using my time to the best advantage. This may have been partly caused by the fact that I was forced to remain indoors for two days due to some sort of intestinal trouble induced by the change in climate and food.

Keith has started her course in the Summer School. She is taking work in Mexican Social Problems, Mexican Art, Mexican Literature, and two language courses. On two days a week she has afternoon classes in Mexican dances and songs. By the time she finishes all this I expect that I will have to turn the job here over to her and petition the Institute to send me to some place where I will not have so much learned competition.

With best personal regards from both of us, I am

Very Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature, likely "E. S. R.", written in dark ink. The signature is stylized and appears to be written over a circular stamp or mark.



Interview.

Montaña, Tomás.

Office of Director of Summer School, Mex.D.F.

7/12/27.

Presented my letter of introduction from Hackett and was most cordially received.

Outlined rather ~~briefly~~ briefly my plans for the study of Mexican social problems beginning with the problems of education and race. (Conversation carried on in English-which Montaña speaks with excellence and precision).

Promised to aid me in every way possible-especially by introducing me to all the notable persons in the educational world in Mexico. "You must rely upon our good will and interest in you for anything that you may desire."

(Later on introduced me to Prof. Rogerio de la Selva, Professor de la Facultad de Derecho y Ciencias Sociales. x Also to Dr. Alfonso Pruneda, Rector of the University.)

Mexico City,D.F.,  
Hotel Geneve,  
8a Calle Liverpool 133,  
July 17,1927.

ENS...WSR..4.

My dear Mr.Rogers:

This week has brought a perfect harvest of new contacts.Perhaps it would be better for me to say that I have been sowing the seeds from which I hope to reap a harvest in due course, for as yet the results,though tangible,are not noteworthy.

Although it served no immediate need or purpose, in line with the studies which I have under way at present,I felt in the interest of courtesy that I should put in my appearance at the embassy rather early in the game.Of Alan Winslow I need tell you very little.Your conversation with him(sometime in January,I believe) had prepared the ground very nicely for me.He expressed great interest in the Institute and wanted to know all about the general plan of procedure as well as mine in particular.These I sketched for him in a very broad way.On his own initiative he offered to help me in any way he could when I got around to the study of the oil and land situation.My short conversation with him left me with the impression that he has his feet planted solidly on the ground-albeit,ground over which waves the American flag.Incidentally,I may add that he was very cordial and friendly and in a purely social way may make life pleasant for us.

Fred Hibbard,one of the under-secretarys at the embassy,I knew as a student in the University of Texas.In those days he was the "campus aesthete" with a reputation for a somewhat vagrant interest in literature,art,music,-infine,Culture.An hour's

conversation with him over a glass of beer at the little German restaurant, officially known as the "Embassy Annex", revealed the fact that several years of diplomacy has in no way changed him. He has been in the service in England and Russia. Also, he was Kellogg's private secretary in the days before Mr. Kellogg reached his present eminence. The point of all of which is that Hibbard is the type that knows all the gossip and doesn't mind spreading it. Taken with a dash of salt he may prove useful.

John Cornyn is an elderly gentleman with a varied and interesting career. Id est: graduate of Toronto University with honors in Romance languages; studied in France and Germany; newspaper work on Toronto papers and as staff correspondent for the New York Press in Cuba and Mexico City; managing editor of several Mexican newspapers; Latin-American editor for various encyclopedias; professor of Romance languages in Southwestern University and in Birmingham Southern College; four years superintendent of American Colony Schools in Mexico City....at present head of the Chicago Tribune foreign news service in Mexico City. All of the above listed would have been enough to make Mr. Cornyn a valuable man to know. However, his value for me is enhanced by the fact that he is reputed to know a great deal about the old Aztec culture. Indeed, he teaches a course in the University on Aztec literature. Of course, Aztec literature is not one of my major concerns in my efforts to understand the problems of present day Mexico, but I have a notion that a little discretely displayed interest in the subject may open up a channel of information to matters of greater moment.

Up until this week I have been making more headway with my studies of the educational developments than with the problem of the racial basis of Mexican civilization. However, last Thursday I was fortunate enough to meet one of the foremost Mexican sociologists, by name Daniel Cosío Villegas, who bids fair to be of great assistance in the study of the latter problem.

Villegas, although still a young man, has taught in the National University for several years and has spent one year as a student of agrarian economics in the University of Wisconsin. He is now giving courses on the "Mexican Revolution" and on "The Agrarian Problem in the United States and Mexico". In several little pamphlets which he has published under the title, "Sociologia Mexicana", he exhibits a keen sense for the distinctive characteristics of the life of the people and a respectable grasp of the more recent theories of social forces. He gave me a bibliography of the best Mexican sources on ethnographic subjects and promises next week to introduce me to some of the leading authorities in this field.

Before I came down almost every one to whom I talked about Mexico said somewhere in the conversation--"and you must be sure and meet Francis Toor". Well, the other night at a "fiesta" which I will describe a little later, I met Francis<sup>e</sup> Toor. She proved to be an American lady who has spent a good part of her thirty-five years in Mexico. Editor of a Magazine called "Mexican Folkways"; teacher of English in the City Schools; student of Mexican archaeology...she is persona grata with the intelligentsia, and apparently considered "muy simpatica" by Mexicans

in general. She has traveled over a good part of Mexico and lived with some of the Indian tribes. She knows both the educational system and the labor movement from the inside. Wherefore, I expect that she will serve the Institute both as a source of information and of introductions to her friends.

So much for the seeds sown. Now a few words about the first green sprouts in the field of education.

Yesterday, armed with a letter to the head of the division of publications, one Señor Salvador Novo, I visited the "Secretaría de Educación". Here I received a complete set of their publications. (I would like to stop here and insert an enthusiastic paragraph about the paintings of Diego Rivera which cover the walls of the Education Building, but this must wait until I know more about them.) The most valuable of the books given me were those on the developments in rural education, and a beautifully illustrated brochure on the now famous "Escuelas al Aire Libre" - or, "Open Air Schools" - of which five have already been established in the city. Both of these reports, judging from the elaborate form in which they are gotten up, smell somewhat of propaganda. However, a little direct observation will serve to check any marked over- or under-statement of the case.

My experience at the "School for Indians" last Thursday evening gave me proof, if proof were needed, of just how superior the method of direct observation is to the gathering of information from simply reading printed reports. We were invited to the school to witness a celebration in honor of a number of Guatemalan Indians who had walked all the way from their native country.

The school, I gather, is something of a hobby with the government and hence with a number of the intellectuals and society folk. Both of the latter were well represented, occupying the seats of honor in the auditorium where the program of native songs, dances, and music was presented. The physical equipment of the school—built only a year ago—was all very new, and clean, and white, and modern. There were manual training shops, gardens, the regulation assortment of class rooms, and a beautiful outdoor swimming pool. I met the director of the school and the teacher of music. Never have I witnessed such enthusiasm on the part of the officials in charge of an undertaking of this sort. The students (numbering 196 now), one is told, are all pure blooded Indians brought from all the far corners of Mexico. They are to be given a two year course and then sent back to leaven the lump in their native villages. The sponsors of the undertaking expect it to disprove once and for all the theories of the inferiority of the indigenous races in Mexico..... But enough of this for the present. I am convinced that the experiment is very significant and in my report on education in Mexico I will give it full and adequate treatment.

.....

Life grows more interesting and exciting every minute.

ENS

INTERVIEW.

Beals, Carlton.

Lunch at Sanborns-Mex. City.

7/18/27.

Was invited to lunch by Beals in response to having sent him my letters of introduction from Tannebaum and Herring.

Beals is rather small, though somewhat stockily built, with very light blue eyes and blonde hair. At present he is devoting all of his time to his writing--mostly articles on Mexico.

Outlined to him the nature of the Institute and my own plans here in Mexico. He was keenly interested in the Institute and expressed his pleasure that at last some students were coming down with no axes to grind. In commenting on my plans he especially advised me to spend as much time as possible out of the capital. He feels that the capital represents a very heterogenous agglomeration of cultures and in no way <sup>is characteristic of</sup> represents the greater part of Mexico.

He <sup>believed</sup> ~~felt~~ that the School for Indians while interesting was all wrong in theory.. "a sort of Indian zoo". The same thing was tried once before and failed during the viceroyalty". Thinks ~~that~~ Vasconcellos and Gamio are on the right track in taking the school to the Indians rather than bringing the Indians to the school. <sup>Thinks</sup> ~~feels~~ that the contact with the city culture will either result in the Indians ~~xxx~~ failing to return to their native villages, or that ~~xx~~ if they do return they will be unfit ~~for~~ for the very purpose for which they have presumably been trained--i.e. to help their own villages. Their very education will serve to set them apart and isolate them from their own people.

In talking of Nicaragua he said that one could not really understand the situation unless one knew that Sacasa really represented one side of an ~~xxx~~ inter-urban feud which had been going on ~~ix~~ for many years. Told me of the favorite indoor sport of buying and selling railroads in Nic... a game at which the New York bankers ~~always~~ always win. In this part of the conversation his attitude was not that of a radical crying for justice. ~~xx~~ He left the impression of having a rather balanced point of view. "If I were a banker I wouldnt invest money in Nic. without guarantees and my finger in the pie in Washington".

Broached the subject, ~~to him~~ of accompanying him on one of his trips into the back-country. Agreeable to this. Suggested that we might take a horse back trip in ~~xxxx~~ Oaxaca.

Thinks a good thorough study of oil in Mexico is what is most needed at the present time.

Mexico City,D.F.,  
Hotel Geneve,  
8a Calle Liverpool 133,  
July 24,1927.

ENS...WSR...5.

My dear Mr.Rogers:

I am led to reflect these days upon the curious melange of motives and tendencies which throng the mind of one who seeks to catch and hold, and later set forth in words, the essence of the living reality which is Mexico. To be sure one must play the scientist. Observations must be made without prejudice; notes must be gathered coolly and calculatingly. Above all, knowledge must be classified, tabulated, and ordered for efficient use. But this is not enough. Irresistably one is impelled to exercise whatever powers one has of intuitive insight and imaginative prevision. One senses a thousand nuances in the daily life of the people. The struggle for existence presents itself in a kaleidoscope of color, now subtly blending, now patterned in sharp outline. On every side one is challenged by fleeting, scarcely perceived impressions, each one of which seems to hold the key to some secret inner door of knowledge and understanding... In short, to interpret the life of a people, one must also play well the role of the poet and the novelist.

All that I have said here is, of course, trite and commonplace, but even the trite and the commonplace in Mexico wears its rue with a difference. For example, take our experience yesterday afternoon. From one point of view all



that happened was that we had tea with a very pleasant Mexican family out in one of the suburbs of the city. And yet ~~to~~ really to body forth in its colorful detail all that was revealed of Mexican life and history in this one family would take the genius of a Gorki or a Meredith.

Of course, nothing was said outright; but <sup>spoken</sup> words are unnecessary when the story is written in the very stones of the house. At the head of the family the mother, her corpulent figure clothed in a black velvet dress a little the worse for wear; the three grown daughters who just miss being attractive (the eldest now happily married off but a month ago); the son-in-law who announced that no gentleman would have anything to do with present day Mexican politics; the old house itself, set back discretely from the street, half hidden behind a great stone wall, and filled with curious cabinets and gilt and plush French furniture... details all, to make up the complete picture of polite decadence. Here one seemed to see in poignant reality at least one aspect of what has followed in the path of the Mexican revolution: the old aristocracy frigidly withdrawn to an existence of quiet decay in the backwaters of the nation's life.

In sharp contrast allow me to juxtapose the picture of another party which we attended earlier in the week. This one was given at the apartment of a young American lady, by name, Mary Doherty. (She works in the publicity bureau of the Mexican government and will be valuable.) For the party

add one very tall and very voluble Austrian count; one New Orleans architect who is here doing pencil sketches of political leaders for a New York newspaper; two rather silent and retiring Russian gentlemen, <sup>es</sup>secretarys in the Russian legation; one summer school student who teaches French in North Carolina; Carleton Beals (see below); Francis Toor (see previous letter)... stir well and mix in cigarettes and tea-and there is your party. Did someone say that Mexico City was cosmopolitan? Voilà!

I have met many people this week, but I will speak of only two at this time. On Monday I had lunch with Carleton Beals. Beals, as you will perhaps recall, came to Mexico from California circa 1918. Some say that he left the United States because he could not agree with the government on the subject of the draft law. He says (in one of his books) that he left to save his soul from the deadening effects of working for the Standard Oil Company. Perhaps both reasons are true. At any rate he has, at one time or another, traveled over almost all of Mexico and has written two books and a number of articles on the various aspects of modern Mexican life. After reading in his books of the hardships which he has endured in his travels through the country, one is rather surprised to find him a rather small man with light blue eyes and blonde hair. Also, he has a quiet slow manner of speaking altogether different from the intensity with which he writes.

The following paragraphs taken from my record of the interview with him will give you some idea of the man.

"Was keenly interested in my plans and expressed his pleasure that at last some one was coming down to study Mexico with no

ax to grind. In commenting on my plans he especially advised me to spend as much time as possible out of the capital. Feels that the capital represents a very heterogenous agglomeration of cultures and is only slightly characteristic of greater part of Mexico.

"Believes that while the "School for Indians" is interesting, that it is all wrong in theory.. "a sort of Indian Zoo'. Recalled the fact that same thing was tried once before under the Vice-royalty and failed. Thinks that Vasconcellos and Gamio were on the right track in taking the school to the Indians rather than bringing the Indians to the school. 'The contact with the city culture will either result in the Indians failing to return to their native villages, or, if they do return they will be unfit for the very purpose for which they have been presumably trained. Their very education will serve to set them apart and isolate them from their own people'.

"In talking of Nicaragua he said that one could not really understand the situation unless one knew that Sacassa represented one side of an inter-urban feud which had been going on for many years. Told of the favorite indoor sport of buying and selling railroads in Nicaragua-a game at which the New York bankers always win. He was careful to say that his information about this was second hand. In this part of conversation he did not give the impression of a radical crying in the wilderness for justice. 'If I were a banker I would'nt invest money in Nicaragua either, without guarantees and a finger in the pie in Washington".

One of my other "contacts" for this week I believe you have met-Dr. Clarence Henry Haring, Professor of Latin American History and Economics, Harvard. Haring is here for a two months stay mainly in the interest of making an investigation for one of the foundations which proposes to establish a number of fellowships for Latin American students in North American universities. These fellowships are to be similar in plan and purpose to those now dispensed by the Rhodes Foundation and the Commonwealth Fund. I was unable to learn the name of the foundation, but I am sure that it would be easy to discover around Harvard or in New York. It may be that the Institute would desire to establish some sort of rapprochement later on. Haring asked many questions about my work here and the Institute. If

you would care to drop in on him sometime at Harvard I am sure that you would find him good solid stuff.

There is one problem on which I would like to have your advice. Now that I am getting along with my work on the current educational developments in Mexico the outline of my report is beginning to fall into view. I can see that there will be a number of more or less related divisions such as, for example, "The Rural School Movement", "The Agricultural Schools", "The Open Air City Schools" etc. Each of these could be written up separately as I go along and the report sent in to the Institute. This would have the advantage of an early display of the results of my study and give you a chance for criticism while the work is in progress. On the other hand, I can wait until I have finished my whole preliminary study (sometime in November) of education in Mexico and then send in one complete report. This would have the advantage of allowing me to see various aspects of the problem in relation to the whole and would obviate the necessity of repeating background materials. Frankly, I am somewhat disposed to follow the latter plan at the present time.

My best regards to you, Sir.

A handwritten signature, possibly "J.H.", in dark ink, located below the closing text.