

5-15-1937

A Letter from Per

William Appel

Department of Anthropology

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nm_anthropologist

Recommended Citation

Appel, William and Department of Anthropology. "A Letter from Per." *New Mexico Anthropologist* 1, 5 (1937): 70-71.
https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nm_anthropologist/vol1/iss5/9

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Anthropology at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in New Mexico Anthropologist by an authorized editor of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact disc@unm.edu.

known, and others rather incompletely known, due to their inaccessibility. These are entire areas offering Archaeology-making knowledge, and the joys of pioneering advancement. A golden opportunity for some altruistic soul to contribute an airplane and plenty of juice to make it go!

The local museums are small, and overcrowded. They are financially poor, but they do good work. Their publications are limited, and confined largely to newspaper reports.

The local public interest is overwhelmingly for the spectacular and the sensational; the scientific interest is limited to a very small nucleus.

The prices of most Peruvian commodities are fully as high as are those of the States, and for many things, even higher. The only low prices that I can quote are those of urban transportation, and those of the native crafts, the latter the rates of the provinces, at that.

In closing, may I suggest a few things which might be considered as absolute fundamentals, that should be secured before setting foot off U.S. shores, in order to assure an easy, tranquil, and purposeful jaunt around Peru. At least a Bachelor's degree, a broad anthropologic foundation, an interest in the area, a command of the Spanish language, plenty of money (at least fifty dollars a month for traveling even as lightly as we do), unlimited time; and last, and far from least -- a goodly supply of tobacco!

William J. Appel
Lima, Peru.

In a recent letter, Bill Appel writes from Calle Rifa 338, Lima, Peru, and gives a good idea of the way things are going down there. He has not been going to school regularly throughout the year but has been working at odd jobs from carpentering to selling "diet and calorie pamphlets to undernourished Peruvians". He does not recommend the last. Bill will be going home sometime in June and we should see him here next fall.

Things are very expensive in Peru; Bill says "The price of tobacco is heartbreaking. I now pay 40¢ American for a tin, and at that I am buying contraband at a little hole which an Englishman topped me off to."

Concerning the state of archaeology at San Marcos University and throughout Peru, Bill has plenty to say: "There are about 200 Anthropology students at San Marcos, but it is highly doubtful if there are 3 who are serious (statement of one of the professors My tentative opinion, based on interrogations of a number of students is that they do not know straight up". Bill should have his opinion well crystalized soon. He is about to attend classes at both San Marcos and Católica Universidad. Bill bewails the fact that in spite of the amount of wealth that is to be found in Peru, so very little goes for archaeologic work. He confirms that which most of us had felt; that the dictator Benevides, is not forwarding the progress of his country. To use Bill's own words; "... this country is wealthy. The only element to benefit from it, however, is the War Department."

Few of us could read this paragraph in the letter without feeling mingled anguish and fury. I have seen six archaeologists read it so far and the results have been similar; a stricken look followed by lurid profanity. I quote verbatim: "Early in the year, a ruin up to the north yielded a number of gold idols and vases set with emeralds--- beautiful things !!-- the most gold that I have ever seen. They must weigh pounds all told, and with

the gems thrown in you have a lot of cold cash in any man's language. The archaeologists had found something but what happened? They were put out and the army moved in. It is now "excavating" a la steam shovel method. Beautiful mummies go by the board, and the gold goes into Bullion."

Fretty bad, is it not? Most of the collections in the overcrowded museums have been purchased from "haqueros" or pot hunters some of whom make their living by "outraging ruins" as Bill so clearly puts it. The wanderer does not seem any too enthusiastic about the region: "Well, to generalize: I might say that the region is a most fertile field, if anyone is particularly interested in it, and the ruins I have seen to date are huge and delapidated."

We can all look forward to seeing Bill next year and to hearing more of Peru. His address in Massachusetts is 188 High Street, Dalton.

DEPARTMENTAL PROGRAM FOR 1937-38

Due to absence during 1937-38 of Dr. Florence Hawley and Mr. Frank Hibben, several changes in teaching staff and course offerings will be made. Dr. Willard W. Hill (Ph. D. in Anthropology, Yale 1933 -- dissertation on "Agricultural and Hunting Methods of the Navajo Indians") will substitute as assistant professor of Anthropology for Dr. Hawley. Dr. Hill has studied at the University of California, University of Washington and Yale University under such men as Kroeber, Lowie, Gifford, Olson, Spier, Sapir, Osgood and Wissler. He has been a fellow of the National Research Council in the Navajo country, and for the past several years has directed Anthropological field parties of the Indian Office and Soil Conservation Service in New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, and California. Dr. Hill has specialized in work pertaining to the nomadic and semi-nomadic Indians of the West, and also is an authority on Indian warfare, land titles and tenure, and woodwork, and upon the Indians of Northwestern America. A number of his publications will be found in the Yale Anthropological Series and in "El Palacio." Mrs. Elizabeth Williamson, artist and expert in museum habitat groups for the National Park Service, will offer one course each semester in museum methods. She will be assisted in the museum by Robert Lister and J. Charles Kelley. Section work in General Anthropology will be handled by Mr. Charles Shope, graduate student with honors from Cambridge University, England, under Dr. A. C. Haddon. Research work, off the campus, will be carried on by Wesley Bliss and Frank Hibben. In summary, the actual instructors for 1937-38 will be Brand, Miller, Hill, Fisher, Williamson and Shope.

During the fall semester of 1937-38, Hill will offer Anthropology 1a, 81, 105, and 193; Miller will give 101, 111, 143 and a sociology course; Fisher will instruct in 7 and 183; Williamson 39L; and Brand 3a, 5, 119, 205. The staff will offer, as usual, 251a and thesis 300. This means that only 97, 103, 171, and 191a (scheduled in the catalog) will not be offered. It should be noticed that 108L and 191ab will be offered only in 1938-39 and alternate years thereafter.