

Ward, Charles Pierce Travel Diary

Charles Pierce Ward Travel Diary

1935-1938

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Ward, Charles Pierce Travel Diary Guide to the Charles Pierce Ward Travel Diary SC 00909

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Biographical Information:

Charles Pierce Ward was born May 26, 1917 in New York State. In 1935, he was 5'11", weighed 160 pounds, and had blue eyes and brown hair.

Per a January 7, 1938 Daily News article on Pierce Ward's entry into the Golden Gloves competition, Ward was a "former all-around athlete who gained experience by knocking around the globe as beach-comber, pilot and movie extra."

Further information about this individual or organization may be available in the Special Collections Research Center Wiki: http://scdbwiki.swem.wm.edu/wiki/index.php/Charles_Pierce_Ward.

Scope and Contents

Diary of a young American, Charles P. Ward, who lived in Brazil from March to July, 1936. Ward had evidently not done well at school and his father sent him to Brazil to live for a year. He is partially supervised by Lopo de Millo who is a friend of the family. Initially, Ward spends time making friends, going to clubs and trying to find ways to have fun, but very little time pursuing a job. Throughout the diary, Ward comments on being bored and lonely, how much he misses his family, how he wishes he could find a job, and how introspective he has become. By June, he is really frazzled and unsure what he needs to do. In mid-July, he makes plans to return home. By August, Ward seriously tries to find a job but is unsuccessful. He notes that he wishes to travel down the Panama River and eventually head home, but does not have enough money. He is homesick and lonely and bored with trying to fill up his day. He boards a ship for home on August 12. Ward writes insightfully about the learning experience of being on his own.

For a more detailed description see folder link below.

Keywords

Diaries

Brazil--Description and travel

Young men--Conduct of life

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Description of Subordinate Components

Diary

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Scope and Contents

Some highlights from the diary: The diary begins on February 29 when Charles Ward sails for Bermuda with his parents before going to South America. Family members give him gifts before he leaves. He comments that up to March 27th, the diary was not kept regularly, but written in his cabin on the S.S. Southern Cross. After leaving his parents and Bermuda, he meets a girl, Marcia, with whom he has an on board affair which continues in Rio. Tells how she loved him (written after the affair), but he realized that she was just a replacement to get him through his sadness of leaving his home. They continue to correspond during his stay in South America. Stops in Rio where he tells Marcia goodbye, then visits a bar where the "boys in the band" take him to a red light district. Arrives in Santos in Brazil on March 14. Friend named Lopo de Millo meets him. Lives in a boarding house in Sao Paulo. Visits De Millo's orange plantation in the interior of Brazil and they stay in a mud hut and explore the jungle and have a German cook. Visits area towns and looks for a job. Describes his activities such as visiting friends and night life. Gives cost of items. Bored. "if only some___ would start a fight with me - I would feel much better." Wants to go to Rio. His good friend is named Harold. Tries to learn Portuguese. Comments, "when I arrived in South America I was speaking broken English, now English with an accent and probably Portuguese later on." Visits a German Pensio in Butiogo. Goes to house of June Lowell, "she has gone native." Visits a cotton plantation on the Panama River near Matto Grassa where he stays and helps with the crop. Tony is possibly the owner. Describes the area plus tells of his work and activities, such as watching ranchers bring in cattle. Cheats at cards when playing with some local men. "Anyway, you are allowed to cheat." Visits town of Prudente and a cotton gin. Goes on trip through jungle to buy cotton at a Japanese farmer's plantation. Visits a man who was born in Canada, lived in German and has been in Brazil for 9 years, but too poor to return to Canada. "I know Dad wants me to stay in the country for a year but I'll be damned if I can see it." Fixes his passport for a three month extension on a visit to Sao Paulo. Explains the complications of American companies and the immigration laws of Brazil. Has a dream to take a river trip to Buenos Aires and get a job on a boat to the United States, but does not have enough money. In June, returns to Sao Paulo "for Dad's sake - he wanted me to-." Begins flying lessons with a pilot, Hoover. June 29th is his first solo. On the page opposite June 30, he is reflective about his life, pleasing his Father, not doing well at school and his time in South America. On July 5, he and Harold are arrested, but only Harold charged. Goes to Santos to try to get a job on a Ford Boat back to the United States, but is unsuccessful. The American Consul tells him it is risky to try to work your way back to the United States. He wants to save his airfare so he can cash it in when he arrives home. On July 14, "I am in a state where I don't know whether I am coming or going - don't know if am doing right or not. But I think that going home is the best thing for me and going to school again." "Had my hours certified by the American Consul today." Has dinner with Harold and his girlfriend, Charlotte D'jous of Richmond, Virginia. On July 18th, he is still struggling with his decision to return home, "...oh why didn't I study in school and graduate. I would be O.K. now." "...my mind is jammed with a 1000 thoughts." Spends hours on the dock in Santos looking for a job on a boat to the United States. Asks the American Consul for help, but he says "you had better go home the way you came..." Meets with friends in Santos, who help him find a place to stay, a shack on the beach near Turtle Bay. He stays at the shack from July 25 to August 8. He reads, writes letters, enjoys the beach, hunts, climbs mountains and fishes. His friend, Peter, is an Englishman and a communist and he fixes Charles' passage home. On August 12, Charles boards ship for home. The last entry is August 13th when he tells of hitting his head on a metal beam. Inserts in the diary include: 1935 New York State driver's license for Charles Pierce Ward of Syracuse, New York. 1936 Nassau County, New York State, Hunting License for Charles Pierce Ward. January 7, 1938 Daily News article on Pierce Ward who has entered the boxing Golden Gloves competition. Describes Ward as "former all-around athlete who gained experience by knocking around the globe as beach-comber, pilot and movie extra." Gives a short history of his experiences: arrested in Santos, Brazil for fighting, outstanding athlete in high school, Hollywood movie extra, worker on a Panama River Coffee Plantation and a pilot.