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Article Summary: William Jennings Bryan visited Mexico in 1897, 1904, and 1922. Examining these trips in more detail illuminates his reactions to Mexican-American diplomacy during his tenure as U.S. secretary of state during the Wilson administration.

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Names: William H Prescott, General Lew Wallace, Mayne Reid, Matias Romer, Lawrence W Levine, Benito Juarez, Captain John Ayers, Jose Lopez-Portillo y Rojas, Santa Anna, Woodrow Wilson, Porfirio Diaz; Victoriano Huerta, Francisco I Madero, Henry Lane Wilson, Frank F Fletcher, Secretary McAdoo, Charles Morrow Wilson, Pancho Villa, John J Pershing, Lawrence W Levine, J A Robertson, Ed Sullivan, John Reed (author *Insurgent Mexico*), Martin Luis Guzman, Josephus Daniels, Jose M Puig Casauranc

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Photographs / Images: William Jennings Bryan and wife Mary Baird Bryan about 1900; Bryan at the Cuahtemoc Brewery in Monterey in 1897 (two photos); J A Robertson property in Monterrey



Bryan and his wife Mary Baird Bryan about 1900.

THE MEXICAN JOURNEYS OF WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN, A GOOD NEIGHBOR

By Edward H. Worthen

In 1897 William Jennings Bryan toured Mexico. In 1904 the by-then twice-chosen presidential standard bearer of the Democratic Party and future secretary of state again ventured south of the border. He visited Mexico for the third and last time in 1922. Bryan's biographers are silent concerning these excursions or at best dismiss them in a few words. This oversight of an aspect of Bryan's career is unfortunate. Examining Bryan in the light of his response to strong Mexican influences illuminates his reactions in Mexican-American diplomacy during his tenure as secretary of state in the Wilson Administration.

Because of William H. Prescott, and most probably because of General Lew Wallace and Mayne Reid as well, Bryan's interest in Mexico was keen long before he ever crossed the Rio Grande. Reporting the Bryan visit of 1897 to the Mexican state of Puebla, the *Mexican Herald* refers to one of these boyhood literary influences: "Almost immediately on arriving he proceeded with Mrs. Bryan to Cholula, a place which both of them were very anxious to see owing to their reading of Prescott."¹ Several years later Bryan himself writes: "The history of Mexico reads like a novel. Prescott's description of its conquest by Cortez could hardly be credited but for the information which one finds on every hand."² Young Bryan was also an avid reader of Lew Wallace, whose *Ben Hur* was his favorite novel.³ One can imagine comparable enthusiasm in the youthful reader for Wallace's first literary effort, *The Fair God*, a story of Cortes' conquest. Works by Mayne Reid also appealed to the teenager and perhaps among them were *The Scalp Hunters*, *The Rifle Rangers*, *The White Chief*, *The Free Lances*, *The Lost Mountain*, and *War Life*, all inspired by the author's adventures

as a soldier with the American forces that invaded Mexico in 1847.⁴

In adult life Bryan was influenced by a two-volume work by Mexico's minister to Washington, Matias Romero (1837-1898) that he describes as one "that ought to be studied by every American."⁵ The themes that Romero treats in this and other publications with which Bryan was apparently familiar reveal that the prairie Democrat's interest in Mexico was also motivated by political considerations concerning economic policies close to his heart, bimetallism and tariff reduction.⁶

In addition to these literary determinants of his south-of-the-border wanderlust, an 1896 glimpse of Mexico from the Texas side of the Rio Grande while he was electioneering in El Paso must have contributed as well to Bryan's resolve to cross that river. When that opportunity presented itself a year later, it enabled Bryan and his wife to pioneer frontiers of "good neighborliness" with effects that have endured to the present day. Together they planted the seeds that began to flower hemispherically in the 1930s under the Roosevelt aegis and in Mexico specifically under the care of Bryan's closest friend and perpetuator of his ideals, Ambassador Josephus Daniels.

The Bryans began their 1897 Mexican tour in Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, where they boarded on December 9 the Aztec Limited, a crack passenger train. In the three weeks following they visited Monterrey, San Luis Potosi, Mexico City, Orizaba, Veracruz, Puebla, Toluca, and Guadalajara. Bryan's boyhood illusions concerning Mexico became reality and Mexican hospitality cemented the friendship that he was to hold for the Latin nation until his death in 1925.

Bryan was, as his wife pointed out, a man "who found the greatest pleasure in any evidence of affection." A "gift of an apple, a picture, a cane—no matter how small—would touch his emotions."⁷ In this respect Mexico lived up to its reputation for generosity. In Nuevo Laredo over two thousand people welcomed the Americans as guests of the Mexican nation. In Mexico City, President Diaz placed at their disposal a state carriage and invited them to dine at Chapultepec Castle. Another Diaz invitation enabled the Bryans to attend graduation ceremonies for several hundred school children in Alameda Park. Concerning this event Bryan wrote: "It was our good fortune to be invited to witness the distribution of prizes for the schools of

the Federal District. Nothing impressed me more than the scene here presented. . . . The Indian and the Spaniard, the rich and the poor, all mingle together in the public schools and vie with each other for the prizes."⁸ Bryan was invited to address Mexico's Chamber of Deputies and received a standing ovation from its members. In Toluca, Puebla, and Guadalajara, Bryan was feted by the governors of the states of Mexico, Puebla, and Jalisco. In Veracruz his visit to a Mexican war ship caused the English-language press to gush: "As a pretty compliment to Mr. and Mrs. Bryan, old glory was unfurled from the masthead and a salute of eleven guns was fired."⁹

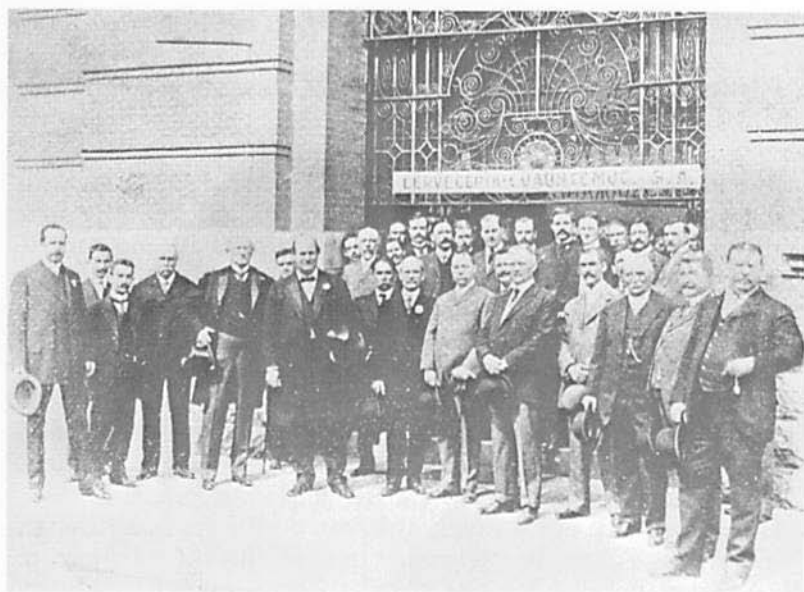
In addition to the honors accorded them by the Mexican government, the Bryans were the recipients of tributes from Mexican society and from Americans residing in Mexico City and Guadalajara. At Mexico City's socially exclusive Jockey Club, now familiar to American tourists as Sanborn's House of Tiles, the Bryans were entertained at luncheon. Subsequently, five hundred persons attended a reception and dinner-dance in their honor at the American Club, where the presidential band and a local orchestra provided the music. A cloakroom mixup and a visit to the billiard room by some of the female guests where "it was very interesting to see them handling the cue," seem to have been highlights of an evening during which "there was not a person present whose individual esteem and good-will [the Bryans] did not win."¹⁰

The largest of these receptions was held in the palatially famous School of Mines through whose portals distinguished visitors have been passing since the days of Agustin de Iturbide and Santa Anna. To this affair that afforded the general public an opportunity to meet the American guests, President Diaz sent the artillery band to provide the music, as well as an "official" chair to be occupied by Bryan during the festivities. Among those present were Americans from the south and west, like the constituents on whom Bryan so heavily relied for political support at home. According to the local press there was "great enthusiasm when the band played 'Dixie' and the 'Star-spangled Banner.' The patriotism of those present broke out in refreshing yells and clapping of hands. There was also much enthusiasm when 'Home Sweet Home' was played and scarcely less, when the pathetic strains of 'La Golondrina' were heard. The band also rendered the beautiful 'La Paloma' with great mastery and as it

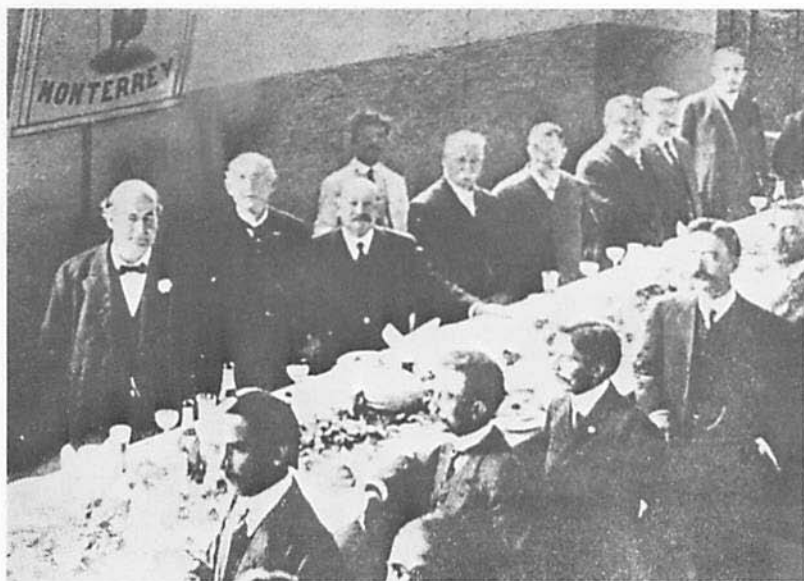
pleased Mrs. Bryan very much it was repeated."¹¹ Lawrence W. Levine tells us that Bryan shared his wife's taste in music, his favorite compositions being "three hymns and such popular pieces as 'Silver Threads Among the Gold' and 'La Paloma,'" a small but significant indication of Mexico's impact upon him.¹²

Other indications of Bryan's warm and personal response to Mexico are found in his memoirs and speeches. At the School of Mines, for example, he stated that an American could feel as much at home in Mexico City as in Washington and concluded: "I shall look to Mexico with a feeling of the warmest friendship for its people, with a feeling of the deepest interest in its progress, with a profound feeling of faith in its future."¹³ Similar sentiments were reflected in his assertion that "Americans in the United States knew very little of the real hospitality of Mexico and Mexicans"¹⁴ and that "we cannot surpass the Mexicans in hospitality or in the courtesy which they extend to strangers."¹⁵

As an ambassador of good will, Bryan invariably did and said the right thing, thus setting an example for Washington officialdom. Sincere, idealistic, courteous, grateful, sentimental, unassuming, and well-read, he was perhaps more appreciated in a country that exalted such qualities than in his own. Bryan's intuitive, sensitive, and always-appropriate response to his hosts is noteworthy when one realizes that he was neither a professional student of Mexico nor the beneficiary of State Department briefings prior to his visit. Illustrative was his request for copies of Mexico's national anthem because "he wanted the bands of his country to learn to play the patriotic air so that when Mexican citizens visited the States they could be welcomed with the strains of their native hymn."¹⁶ The Mexican press was quick to note his appreciation of capital attractions like Chapultepec Park and the Paseo de la Reforma, as well as of national landmarks like the volcanoes, Popocatepetl and Ixtaccihuatl. The journalists were impressed by the Protestant visitor's pilgrimages to the Basilica of Guadalupe and other Catholic shrines, by his democratic purchase from a street peddler of citrus fruit on a day he chose to forego lunch rather than sacrifice valuable sightseeing time, and by his interest in Mexican commerce and industry as reflected in visits to silk and chocolate factories in Mexico City, to coffee wharves in Veracruz, and to the infamous Rio Blanco textile factory in Orizaba.



Bryan (left center) visited the Cuauhtemoc Brewery, Monterrey, during his first Mexican tour in 1897. . . . (Below) Bryan, normally a teetotaler, attended a champagne luncheon inside the brewery.



Participating in most activities was Mrs. Bryan, no less effective as an ambassador of good neighborliness, whether waving her handkerchief from train platforms to Mexican wellwishers or exclaiming over the "fluency and correctness with which Mrs. Diaz conversed in English."¹⁷ Indeed, so impressed were the Bryans by the cultural and educational attainments of Mexico's leaders that they seem to have made it their mission to reeducate the ethnically prejudiced American public concerning them. Bryan wrote in *Under Other Flags* that he found Mexicans "not inferior to our own in intelligence, education and general information," an appraisal strengthened by his statement that the "cabinet officers, governors, members of the national and state congresses, mayors etc., whom I met were, without exception, men of refinement and scholarly attainments."¹⁸

Historians have made much of Bryan's 1902 visit to Russia's Count Alexis Tolstoy in attempting to prove his indebtedness to the Russian novelist for the pacifist doctrines and noninterventionist credos by which he was guided as Woodrow Wilson's secretary of state. No one, however, has mentioned the possible influence of Mexican president, Benito Juarez, whose motto, "Among individuals as well as nations, the respect for the rights of others is peace," has been the primary determinant of Mexican foreign policy for over a century. As politically astute a visitor to Mexico as Bryan could hardly have ignored Juarez' example and indeed Bryan did not. In one of several references to the Zapotec liberal, he lauded Mexico for being "as firm as the United States in the support of the Monroe Doctrine, having realized only thirty years ago the dangers attendant upon an attempt to extend monarchical institutions upon the western hemisphere." He added that it was Juarez "who successfully defended his country against Maximilian," Napoleon III's puppet emperor, and that after Hidalgo, Juarez was "the second great Mexican leader of the Nineteenth Century."¹⁹ It is not known whether Bryan paid graveside tribute to Juarez in the San Fernando Cemetery, but he told a Mexican audience that Americans and Mexicans have much in common because "if we carry flowers to Mount Vernon, you carry them to the tomb of Juarez."²⁰

In another Mexican graveyard the United States National Cemetery established by congressional act in 1850 as a burial place for the American dead of the Mexican War in 1847, Bryan

found support of a different sort for his noninterventionist and anti-imperialist doctrines. Concerning his visit to this American enclave on December 17, 1897, he wrote several years later:

Sometimes the imperialist attempts to appeal to a patriotic sentiment and argues that our flag must float over the Philippines because Americans lie buried there. If he will visit Mexico, he will find in the suburbs of the capital an American graveyard where the stars and stripes are raised at sunrise and lowered at sunset. In this ground owned by the United States, the soldiers of the Mexican war, known and unknown, are buried and an American citizen, an appointee of our government, sees that their graves are kept green. Here on Decoration Day flowers are brought, and the sleep of these soldiers is none the less sweet because their companions in arms and their country's officials preferred to observe the principles of the Declaration of Independence rather than convert a republic into an empire.²¹

Bryan's motives in visiting the American cemetery were not, however, exclusively doctrinaire. A long-time graveyard buff who relieved the vicissitudes of congressional life in Washington with escapes to Arlington Cemetery where he relaxed by reading headstone inscriptions and "rehearsed speeches to the silent subterranean hosts," Bryan was right at home among a people as fond of graveyard perusing as are the Mexicans.²² Although Bryan rehearsed no speeches among the dead in Mexico, he did read epitaphs and examined with great interest the monument beneath which 750 unidentified American soldiers of the Mexican-American War had been buried in a communal grave. So delighted by Bryan's visit was the cemetery superintendent, Captain John Ayers, reputed to be a survivor of the California gold rush and Kit Carson's Indian-fighting brigades, that he ordered the American flag raised in honor of his guest and offered a toast to the Democratic Party. This gesture was applauded by Bryan, but, true to his abstemious convictions, he did not join him in the consumption of the alcoholic beverage. The visit over, Bryan left the cemetery carrying a bouquet presented by Captain John who "waved his handkerchief enthusiastically at the departing guests as happy as a school boy."²³

Before leaving the Mexican capital, the Bryans went on an unusual shopping expedition to acquire political ammunition for the tariff debates of 1898. Mrs. Bryan explained:

"Anticipating this campaign the winter before, when in Old Mexico, Mr. Bryan and I had made a tour of the hardware shops of Mexico City, and as we had suspected, we

found American cutlery selling for much less there than it sold for in the United States, some articles costing fifty percent less. This fact seemed to prove to the friends of tariff reduction that the tariff wall enabled the manufacturer to charge the American consumer any price he chose, and then dump the surplus on the foreign market, and still make money on a twenty-five to fifty percent reduction. We bought several articles—particularly pocketknives and butcher knives of different sizes—put them into a neat handbag, and Mr. Bryan produced his wares at the first debate. The effect was good."²⁴

At Guadalajara the Bryans were received no less enthusiastically than they had been in the Mexican capital. Serenades, an official reception given by the novelist-statesman Jose Lopez-Portillo y Rojas, a visit with Jalisco governor Curiel, a concert in the Plaza de Armas, a jai alai game, and the presentation by the American colony to the visitors of busts of themselves by the sculptor Panduro, were highlights of the visit. The governor and other officials joined the American inhabitants in accompanying the Bryans to the train on which they returned home.

Seven years later the Bryans were again in Mexico. They came, as in 1897, to recuperate from a Democratic defeat, although this time Bryan had not been the presidential candidate. They came because "those who have been there before find themselves unable to resist the temptation to return occasionally to enjoy again the fascinating beauty of the scenery and to note the progress which the young republic to the south of us is making."²⁵ Bryan added: "Nowhere in the world can the tourist find so much variety in so limited a territory and no country offers to the American so much of interest and of education at so small an expense. The Aztec ruins alone would repay a visit."²⁶ And as before, they came in search of ammunition for political battles yet to be fought.

Few American politicians strayed less from the principles with which their public careers were launched than William Jennings Bryan. In support of bimetallism, tariff reduction, pacifism, anti-imperialism, and self-determination for nations, Bryan found the Mexican example as important in 1904 as it had been in 1897. Bimetallism being of paramount concern, as always, he was quick to point out that silver-standard Mexico's principal export was silver and added: "We brought back to confound the republicans an Aztec god with gold and silver ornaments, showing that both metals were appreciated by the native Americans before the republican party was organized. There is about sixteen times as much silver as gold on the idol."²⁷

An opportunity for another barb directed at the Republican Party presented itself when Bryan recalled the episode of General

Santa Anna's leg, lost in a skirmish with French forces at Veracruz and buried with honors in 1836. Later, when Santa Anna's popularity had waned, the leg was exhumed and kicked through the streets of Mexico City, a circumstance that prompted Bryan to write: "I have sympathized with Santa Anna sometimes when I have been buried by the republicans and then exhumed for purposes of criticism."²⁸

Bryan was again inspired by Mexico to lash out against imperialists at home who would have left the stars and stripes flying over Chapultepec in 1847 and to extol noninterventionist policies of the Monroe Doctrine: "If any conflict arises between the United States and European countries in respect to the enforcement of the Monroe doctrine, Mexico is likely to be our staunchest and most valuable ally."²⁹

As the result of his encounter with a canine tippler on a pulque plantation, Bryan voiced a no less typical concern than the socio-economic virtues of silver coinage and the evils of imperialism. Of the unusual alcoholic he wrote: "He has ceased to be of value as a shepherd dog, but he is still useful as a horrible example."³⁰

By the end of his second Mexican tour, Bryan had broadened his geographic knowledge of Mexico with visits to an Oaxaca rubber plantation and to Guanajuato, "noted for having one of the oldest silver mines, one of the handsomest theatres, and the largest collection of mummies to be found on the continent."³¹ While dispensing superlatives, he also described Guadalajara as "one of the prettiest cities to be found anywhere."³²

Although Bryan suffered four years later, in 1908, his third defeat in a bid for the presidency, his two-year term as Woodrow Wilson's secretary of state (1913-1915) was a personal victory in the field of Mexican-American relations at a difficult time in history. There can be little doubt that the sympathy and affection Bryan had acquired for Mexico in 1897 and 1904 assisted him in this period. Revolution, factionalism, and civil war in Mexico had disturbed American businessmen whose interests were threatened. But despite the pressure they and other jingoists brought to bear in behalf of armed intervention by the United States, the secretary of state held firm. On political and moral grounds he identified with the Mexican revolutionaries, and as for the regard he had once held for Porfirio Diaz, the oligarch's latter-day behavior, including a switch from silver

standard to gold exchange, was sufficient justification for Bryan's sympathetic view of the revolution.

Despite these sympathies and Bryan's pro-Mexico record, his detractors have made much of the Tampico-Veracruz affair that did result in the military intervention Bryan had fought to prevent. His uncharacteristic yet tragically unavoidable behavior in this matter reveals the depth of his antipathy for the coup d'état government of the right wing general, Victoriano Huerta, who was responsible for the death of revolutionary President Francisco I. Madero. Moreover, Huerta was an alcoholic, a contributing factor in earning Bryan's contempt. Other targets were Huerta's American supporters, including Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson who had demanded that Washington recognize the Mexican dictator. Because of his feelings in this matter, Bryan denied to the Huerta de facto government American recognition, the first such refusal from the State Department since the days of Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson. There are those who argue that Bryan was wrong in departing from traditional diplomatic practice, no matter what his motives and that non-recognition is, in fact, a kind of intervention.

The second act of the Bryan-Huerta imbroglio revolved around Huerta's refusal to order a 21-gun salute of the American flag in redress for an alleged affront directed against American naval personnel at Tampico in April, 1914. Another aspect of the drama was the arrival at Veracruz of a German vessel with a cargo of weapons for Huerta. Admiral Frank F. Fletcher, instructed to seize the Mexican port, did so by force of arms, with the resulting loss of over 300 Mexican lives.³³

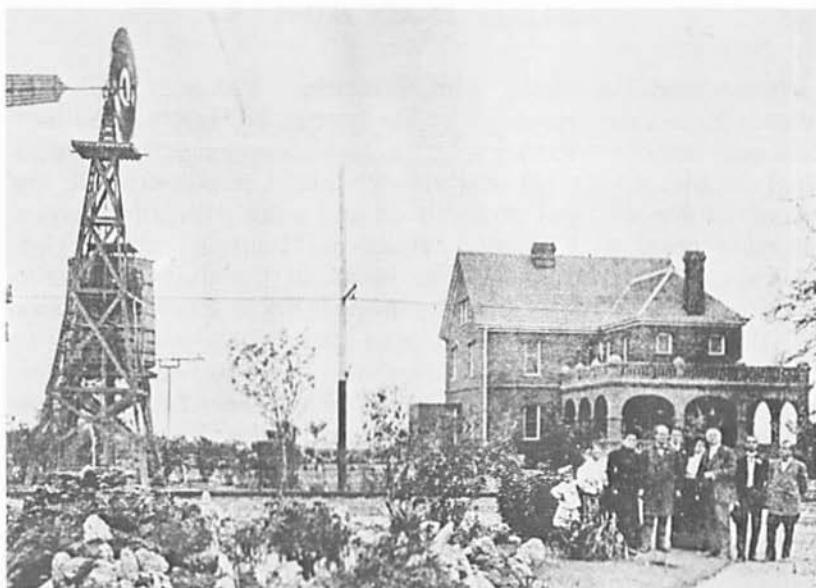
In addition to the question of national honor that must be interpreted in the spirit of the times if Bryan is to be dealt with fairly, Wilson's secretary of state may have operated in this affair under the idealistic premise that by striking out at Huerta he was helping the cause of democracy and social justice in Mexico. What he failed to realize, however, was that regardless of ideological differences, the Mexicans were united in interpreting foreign intervention as a blow to the national dignity and sovereignty.³⁴

However one views this diplomatic mire, one cannot help but sympathize with a sensitive Bryan, who was forced to order an assault against a city that seventeen years before had

affectionately welcomed him somewhat ironically with an eleven-gun salute. Haunted by the spectre of Huerta, who had plunged him into a situation he was powerless to resolve and who had set him up for political attack, forced to compromise his ideals of international brotherhood and nonintervention, Bryan became obsessed with the dream of Huerta's defeat. This obsession can be measured in terms of the uncharacteristic manner in which the usually circumspect Bryan greeted the news of Huerta's resignation three months later. Mrs. Bryan describes her husband's reaction: "July fifteenth is worthy of note . . . , the day on which Huerta left Mexico. When Secretary McAdoo came, Will told him of the retirement of Huerta. They embraced and danced about like a pair of boys. Every one was in a lively mood. . . . We shall not soon forget the day Huerta left Mexico or the joy which his going occasioned."³⁵

A somewhat more spirited account of the event is given by Charles Morrow Wilson: "Bryan bounded toward the tallest and thinnest Cabinet member. 'Guess what!' he shouted, 'Huerta's out!' Then, as one gathers, to the complete astonishment of most or all of those present, the dignified McAdoo grasped Bryan's shoulders and they began to dance, first in solo efforts, then as partners, executing a sort of jig step. McAdoo rarely danced, and so far as anyone present knew, Bryan had never danced before, but look now! Next the two locked arms and began frolicking around the table, high-kicking and prancing like happy colts in a summer shower. Their wives may have gasped, but other onlookers began to applaud vigorously. The most surprised onlooker was the last to arrive."³⁶ And that was Woodrow Wilson.

As extreme as was his loathing of Huerta was Bryan's admiration for Pancho Villa. Nevertheless, critics have unjustly attributed to Bryan the 1916 "punitive expedition" led by General John J. Pershing in pursuit of the controversial revolutionary; actually it was launched nine months after Bryan had resigned as secretary of state. Had it not been for Bryan's continuing influence among the Wilsonian Democrats, Pershing's intervention would have led to more serious complications than it did. Concerning this, Lawrence W. Levine says: "Bryan was not completely able to subordinate his independent views for the good of the party. When the nation began to move dangerously close to war with Mexico, he



During one of his three Mexican tours, Bryan visited the property of a Colonel Robertson, probably J. A. Robertson of Monterrey, mentioned in Bryan's Under Other Flags (Lincoln, 1904).

demanding the withdrawal of General Pershing and his punitive expedition which had been sent across the Mexican border to capture the bandit, Pancho Villa."³⁷

Although viewed by many as a bandit, Villa was for Bryan the personification of his ideals. As unlikely a "historian" as Ed Sullivan referred to the attachment in a *New York Daily News* reference on February 11, 1972, to John Reed's book, *Insurgent Mexico*: "Villa in 1914, was supported by President Woodrow Wilson and Sec'y of State William Jennings Bryan, who saw Villa as a 'Sir Galahad.'"³⁸ Although perhaps not "Sir Galahad" in Bryan's estimation, Villa did not fall far short. And, according to Martin Luis Guzman, Mexican journalist, chronicler of the revolution, and for a time Villa's secretary, the Chihuahua-based revolutionary held Bryan in equal esteem.

Guzman depicts Bryan in his biography, *Memoirs of Pancho Villa* (1938-1940), as a staunch friend of Mexico working to reconcile the opposing revolutionary forces of Villa and Carranza for the good of their country while beseeching them to avoid border skirmishes and other confrontations that might lead to international conflict and foreign intervention. Bryan is

also portrayed pleading with the revolutionary adversaries on humanitarian grounds that Mexico City be declared neutral territory in order to relieve the suffering from thirst and hunger of its inhabitants. This is but one of many humane gestures mentioned by Guzman that reflect much more than just a routinely political interest in a neighboring country.

Approximately a dozen references to Villa's appreciative response to Bryan's activities in behalf of Mexico are also found throughout Guzman's work. Bryan's statement in a letter to Villa that Mexico "is such a great land that every man who seeks to benefit the people can work there to achieve his noblest ambitions," is interpreted by the revolutionary as proof of friendship and interest in his cause. He adds that if Bryan and President Wilson "had wanted to harm us, and not to help us, they would have tried to add to our discord instead of relieving it as they were doing."³⁹ In answering another "friendly and complimentary" letter from the secretary of state, Villa says: "We and our Revolutionary government and all the people of our Republic appreciate the kindness with which the Washington government and the frontier authorities have supported the Revolutionaries in their struggle." This letter, we are told, "pleased Mr. Bryan very much."⁴⁰

In 1922, Bryan and his wife visited Mexico for the third time, a trip taken too late in life to have much importance as a determinant of his public and private behavior during the last thirty months of his life. Bryan went to Mexico in the employ of Douglas, O'Bear, and Douglas, an American concern representing international business interests in Latin America and involved in the settlement of British and American claims against the Mexican revolutionary government. Characteristically, his primary motivation was to resolve in a manner favorable to all litigants foreign entanglements that threatened Mexican sovereignty and the revolutionary program. In short, the friendship that he had held for Mexico and the Mexican people for over 25 years remained constant.

Additional proof of this friendship is that he was willing to go to Mexico at all, given his uncertain health and that of his wife. Bryan's diabetes, advanced and painful, and his wife's arthritis did not, however, prevent them from returning one last time to the country they both loved. It may be noted that this and his earlier Mexican tours had been undertaken during unstable

times that kept most Americans home, and that they had been undertaken despite the fact that Bryan was in some ways a timid person who, according to his daughter, habitually appeared in his own country carrying a heavy black cane for self-defense because his fear of being assaulted by holdup men was so great.⁴¹

In July, 1925, the news of Bryan's death was received in Mexico City "with deep sorrow" even by resident Americans, in spite of the fact that most of them were Republicans. *Excelsior* reported that "without exception they felt deeply the loss of this man whose great political and moral virtues had always been recognized" and that "nothing has so moved the American colony as Mr. Bryan's death."⁴²

Bryan's demise produced no final curtain in the hemispheric drama he had authored and in which he had played the leading role. His work was to live on in the "good neighbor policy" that has endured to the present day through disciples like Josephus Daniels, Franklin Roosevelt's ambassador to Mexico. For almost a lifetime Daniels was Bryan's closest friend. Daniels—of whom Mrs. Bryan once exclaimed: "Skillful Josephus! With his honesty, his admiration for Wilson and his love for Bryan!"—was ever the faithful follower.⁴³

When given the possibility of a diplomatic post in the Roosevelt Administration, Daniels told Commerce Secretary Daniel Roper that "if Roosevelt and Hull had any such position in mind, [he] would prefer Mexico to any other country."⁴⁴ Bryan's influence is also seen in the pride Daniels took in citing a Raymond Clapper appraisal of his fitness for the Mexican post in which the news analyst linked him to Bryan: "He is an old-fashioned country editor, a William Jennings Bryan Democrat, and happens to be just the kind of a person who inspires confidence among the Mexicans who are going through their Bryan period."⁴⁵

A spokesman for the Mexican government expressed similar sentiments and in so doing reaffirmed the affection and respect in which Mexico continued to hold Bryan's memory. Acting to forestall hostility to Daniels' appointment among Mexican intellectuals who remembered his involvement in the Veracruz occupation, Foreign Minister Jose M. Puig Casauranc stated in 1933: "The Mexican Government is prepared to give Ambassador-designate Daniels a hospitable welcome. . . . I do

not know him personally but only through his articles and books. I have two of his books. I should say that he was the inheritor of Bryan—a defender of the masses against capitalism.”⁴⁶

While ambassador between 1933 and 1942, Daniels lived up to the Bryanesque image, even to the point of keeping his embassy “dry” and varying his diplomatic routine by visiting the United States National Cemetery. When he took leave of his Mexican friends in 1942 it was with words that might have been Bryan’s own: “My stay here has been such that the depth of my affection for Mexico is equal to the years since Cuauhtemoc set the standard for deathless love of his country.”⁴⁷

Bryan also traveled in South America, Cuba, and Central America. His vociferous and frequent denunciations of “dollar diplomacy” are well known. His chairmanship of the Pan American Union and his congressional and diplomatic legacy in the field of inter-American laws and treaties are positives in his career. They are mentioned now, in conclusion, to give one last dimension to the portrait of a man of whom Harry S. Truman once said: “Old Bill Bryan was a great one, one of the greatest,” an appraisal with which Latin America in general and Mexico in particular would heartily concur.⁴⁸

NOTES

1. *Mexican Herald* (Mexico City), December 23, 1897, 8.
2. William Jennings Bryan, *Under Other Flags* (Lincoln, Nebraska: The Woodruff Collins Printing Co., 1905), 199.
3. The reference to *Ben Hur* is found in Paxton Hibben's *The Peerless Leader William Jennings Bryan* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1929), 119.
4. *Ibid.*, 69.
5. *Under Other Flags*, 199.
6. The Matias Romero work to which Bryan refers is apparently *Coffee and India-rubber Culture in Mexico: Preceded by Geographical and Statistical Notes on Mexico*. Although the Library of Congress lists no edition prior to that published by G. P. Putnam's Sons in 1898, Bryan does indicate familiarity with its contents before his 1897 tour. A possible explanation of this discrepancy is that Bryan may have confused the 1898 publication with earlier Matias Romero works to which he had access: *Railways in Mexico*, published by W. H. Moore in Washington in 1882, and “The Silver Standard in Mexico,” published in *The North American Review* in June, 1897, and reprinted in 1898 by The Knickerbocker Press.
7. William Jennings Bryan and Mary Baird Bryan, *The Memoirs of William Jennings Bryan* (Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1971), 302.
8. *Under Other Flags*, 185.
9. *Mexican Herald*, December 27, 1897, 5.
10. *Ibid.*, December 21, 1897, 1.
11. *Ibid.*, December 18, 1897, 8.

12. Lawrence W. Levine, *Defender of the Faith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 230.
13. *Mexican Herald*, December 18, 1897, 8.
14. *Ibid.*, December 15, 1897, 1.
15. *Under Other Flags*, 182-183.
16. *Mexican Herald*, December 29, 1897, 1.
17. *Ibid.*, December 15, 1897, 1.
18. *Under Other Flags*, 184.
19. *Ibid.*, 183.
20. *Mexican Herald*, December 18, 1897, 8.
21. *Under Other Flags*, 210-211.
22. Charles Morrow Wilson refers to Bryan's visits to Arlington National Cemetery in *The Commoner: William Jennings Bryan* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1970), 161-162.
23. *Mexican Herald*, December 18, 1897, 8.
24. *Memoirs of William Jennings Bryan*, 254.
25. *Under Other Flags*, 194.
26. *Ibid.*, 194.
27. *Ibid.*, 194. As the champion of the agrarian west and south, Bryan defended the silver purchase clause of the Sherman Act, led the free-silver movement in opposition to the conservative gold standard and hard money policies generally favored by the eastern establishment, and advocated the virtually unlimited coinage of silver at a ratio to gold of 16 to 1.
28. *Ibid.*, 200.
29. *Ibid.*, 211.
30. *Ibid.*, 197.
31. *Ibid.*, 195.
32. *Ibid.*, 195.
33. William Weber Johnson treats the Veracruz episode quite comprehensively in Chapter 15 of *Heroic Mexico* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1968).
34. Mexican reaction, especially in Veracruz, to the American landing is graphically described in Jose Mancisidor's autobiographical novel *Frontera junto al mar*, a work for which the author received the *Ciudad de Mexico* award in 1949.
35. *Memoirs of William Jennings Bryan*, 355-356.
36. *Commoner: William Jennings Bryan*, 337-338.
37. *Defender of the Faith*, 79.
38. *New York Daily News*, February 11, 1972, C 25.
39. Martin Luis Guzman, *Memoirs of Pancho Villa*; translated by Virginia H. Taylor (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1965), 277.
40. *Ibid.*, 299-300.
41. *The Commoner: William Jennings Bryan*, 268-269.
42. *Excelsior* (Mexico City), July 28, 1925, 2.
43. *The Memoirs of William Jennings Bryan*, 333.
44. Josephus Daniels, *Shirt-sleeve Diplomat* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1947), 22.
45. *Ibid.*, 261-262.
46. E. David Cronon, *Josephus Daniels in Mexico* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1960), 19.
47. *Shirt-sleeve Diplomat*, 528.
48. Merle Miller in "A Few Lessons in History From Harry Truman" in *Esquire* (Chicago: Esquire, Inc.), January, 1974, 58.