Georgia Journalist Describes Her Trip to the Boulder Dam

Editor's Note: Mildred Seydell, famous newspaperwoman, novelist and world traveler, en route to the east after a trip to Australia and New Zealand, recently visited in Las Vegas and Boulder City and has written a series of three articles for the Georgian-American of Atlanta, Georgia, which gives her impressions of this area in her inimitable style. The first of these stories reprinted from the Georgian-American follows:

By MILDRED SEYDELL

Between me in Los Angeles and Atlanta was Boulder dam challenging. Friends would exclaim, "What, have never seen it? Why, it can give you more thrills than all the others you have packed into this New Zealand-Australia adventure!"

So at 8 o'clock on a Friday morning, on the Union Pacific, the only railroad that serves the dam out from Los Angeles, I was headed for that promised emotion.

This section of the country is dry; that is, weatherly speaking. As for bars, they are on every corner. But weather is fickle. Rain was pouring. Into the wet darkness were handed two huge bright baskets (brought all the way from Pago Pago), a typewriter, five suitcases and Mildred Seydell. Together we clung, getting wetter and wetter with no porter in sight. I began to think of home. The fire blazing in the library hearth, the way the flames licked the logs, the comfortable chair under the lamp, my own evening paper. Was about to get back on that train going east when C. C. Fuller, the nice conductor, who had told me he was a Georgian, owning a farm out of Calhoun, understood that even the most ardent feminist, when southern, often wishes for male protection and consequently gallantly he offered to run the half way block distance to the station to find a porter with a hand truck.

The station was cosy, comfortable. There was Mr. Ira Helmick, a tall serious young man with a soft, slow speaking voice, introducing hmiself as the Union Pacific passenger agent. One glance gave me confidence. I could see he was used to solving satisfactorily transportation problems. Mine was how to get to the dam. I was spending the night at Apache hotel—no, not named for the daring desperate, French ruffian, but for the American Indian tribe. Mr. Helmick explained that I could take the 7 o'clock bus to the dam, or go with him in his car at 7:30 the next morning.

When the two of us left Las Vegas in the early hours the rain had ceased. Nevertheless, clouds hung low. I was agreeably sur-

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prised with the warmth of the morning. I had almost not come, hearing of the biting cold everywhere. My ignorance of this country was enormous. I did not realize that Las Vegas is semi-tropical. However, the temperature ranges from 20 to 120.

REMOTENESS CALMING

Passing through the town we came to the desert. Straight, flat the road lay 18½ miles. No hill, no curve. Deserts intrigue me. They have a peculiar fascination. Long, lonely stretches. The remoteness is calming. In the lonesomeness of the flat, far-flung land, one's thoughts turns to eternity, forgetting the littleness of life. The sands were tufted with clumps of sage, and there were the mesquite bushes. In the distance, mountains. Not friendly green mountains like those of Georgia with their blue haze and growing things, but forbidding mountains, rocky and barren—though sploched with color where minerals lay. Clouds like grey velvet curtains closed them from view only to roll back on some new glory of their jagged tops, or the astounding coloration of their rough hewn sides. The desert does not call for conversation. People who inhabit deserts are taciturn. Talk was sporadic.

The highway to the dam is named for Will Rogers. The country seemed to partake of his character—honest, rugged, clean, colorful country. How different from scenery of Honolulu where the growth is voluptuous, a confusion of beauty exuding subtle perfumes. Here men's thought could be less on poetry, music, love and more on electricity, water supplies. Instead of palm trees with their waving fronds, and thickly tangled vines, here in this Nevada desert were steel towers and electric lines. Miles and miles of them carrying power, means of progress, to people hundreds of miles away. Testifying to the grandeur of desert, mountains, river, conquered by the brain of man.

HOME OF 2,000

Twenty miles and we came to Boulder City, the home of 2,000. The fresh air had whetted our appetite; we stopped at a neat little restaurant for coffee and sugar buns. Mr. Helmick answered my questions as we sipped and ate: The dam was not built as originally planned at Boulder canyon. It was too inaccessible. It is constructed at Black Canyon spanning the Colorado river from the Nevada (Mr. Helmick pronounces the first A short) side to the Arizona.

It was built for three purposes: To control flood waters of the untamed tempermental Colorado which before man made her obey, was likely to be either too generous or too stingy with her waters; to develop electrical powers; to store water for domestic uses and irrigation. Today it has accomplished its purposes and stands a solid magnificent blessing. But before going to inspect it, we drove to Water Tower Hill and from this vantage point surveyed the surrounding country. There was Lake Mead, the man-made lake (caused by the dam) with its 550 miles of coast line, its giant mountains guarding it. Then turning our backs to it we gazed down on Boulder City, a Sunday morning city, looking like a town that had taken its Saturday night scrub, all fresh and tidy and trim with its evergreen bushes; its ashes and cottonwoods whose leafy branches in autumn dress seemed like yellow silken pennants trembling in the breeze. And where the golden leaves were fallen they made puddles of sunshine from their brightness.

It is a straightlaced little town in this state of few DONT'S. No bars, no gambling. Just schools and churches, stores and homes. All about clean, healthful air, and seven miles away that testimony to man's intelligence, his prowess, the Boulder dam.