

Brazil News



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Editorial

Climate and Culture

Never has a country with a tropical climate been a world power.

Strange.

Why did the Mayflower strike out for North America? Why not for South America with its beautiful climate?

Fear of tropical diseases? Political reasons? Sentimental considerations?

Whatever the reasons may be, it's a fact that a fragile little ship with a few very strong men and women aboard set out on what, in retrospect, looks like one of the most foolhardy ventures ever undertaken.

This historic trip to America was a deliberate act. Not a rash decision. Not a novel solution to boredom.

With transatlantic navigation in its infancy, the Pilgrims doubtlessly knew that the chances of reaching their destination were slim.

This chance they were willing to take.

They surely were aware that upon arriving, their only neighbors would be Indians.

They felt that with kindness this obstacle could be surmounted.

Certainly they knew that the home they sought in the Land of Liberty was climatically located in the Temperate Zone. ("Temperate" to scientists because of being located between the tropics and the Arctic – or Antarctic – Circle. Most "intemperate" to Pilgrims.)

Having been raised in a temperate (intemperate?) climate, this struck no special fear in their heart.

In spite of hopes that the Mayflower would be the first of many such ships, they doubtlessly knew that possibly it would be the last.

They were prepared for such an eventuality.

The Pilgrims knew full well that there were no lumber yards or saw mills in

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America. With their trusty axes they would have to manufacture walls, roofs, doors and shutters for their houses. Would there be suitable trees for this?

These folks believed that hard work would produce houses. And stables. And fields. And roads.

They knew there would be no hospitals for when they got sick. No doctors. Only nurses. That was part of being a pioneer woman. But nurses don't remove inflamed appendixes. They don't do caesareans.

They left their home land knowing that a cemetery would be an important fixture in their new community.

These were MEN and WOMEN in the true sense of the word. To call hippies of the male sex "men" and single females who have gendered a child or two and are supported by the government "women" degrades the English language.

Not only the language.

It isn't only the Pilgrims who are worthy of being called MEN and WOMEN in capital letters. Without reference to a myriad of others, may we skip over to our Mennonite forefathers. Certainly the hardships suffered by them were less.

Maybe less, but far beyond what any of us have ever suffered. If you haven't done so yet, read Uncle Abe Unruh's book, *The Helpless Poles*.

Once again we must ask, why did they go to a country that was hot and cold, wet and dry? A country of extremes?

Tropical South America would have been easier. Much easier.

Why are tropical countries seldom in the vanguard of world events?

The truth – no matter how painful or unpleasant – is that the tropics are not a spawning ground for strong character, for outstanding leaders.

Why?

Why were the plains of Kansas and the hills of Oregon settled 150 years ago? Why were the plains of Goiás settled only 20 years ago?

Why did little one room country schools spring up right along with claim shanties all over N America? Why to this day are rural schools almost non-existent in Brazil?

Why did children trudge several miles to school in the snow with a 40° wind chill factor, thus virtually wiping out illiteracy? Why until recently were the majority of South Americans illiterate?

Why? Why? You get the point.

A severe climate makes for strong character. Period.

In their masterful work, *The Lessons of History*, Will and Ariel Durant make the following comment: "In a semitropical climate a nation of half a billion souls may breed like ants, but enervating heat may subject it to repeated conquest by warriors from more stimulating habitats."

I have a feeling that by this time I have a bunch of N American readers saying I have quite a balanced view of things.

But just wait. I haven't finished.

I said that tropics are not a spawning ground for strong character. That doesn't mean

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we don't have people here with good, strong character. We do. It's just that it's harder to acquire and harder to cultivate.

In southern Brazil we have a lot of German descendents. Some of them have moved to Goiás into our area. They're mighty fine folks. But as you learn to know them and how they operate, it soon becomes evident that they too have been bit by the tropical bug. The concept that money should be made through hard, honest labor has been replaced by the very Brazilian idea that to steal from the government isn't sin.

And the Holdeman Mennonites who live in Brazil? We've been here over 20 years. If time goes on another 20 years, what will we be like?

Unless – UNLESS (that needs to be in caps) – we are on our toes, we too will degenerate.

Now for you good folks in N America, I again quote the Durants: "Climate no longer controls us as severely as Montesquieu and Buckle supposed, but it limits us. Man's ingenuity often overcomes geological handicaps: he can irrigate deserts and air-condition the Sahara; he can level or surmount mountains and terrace the hills with vines; he can build a floating city to cross the ocean, or gigantic birds to navigate the sky. But a tornado can ruin in an hour the city that took a century to build; an iceberg can overturn or bisect the floating palace and send a thousand merry-makers gurgling to the Great Certainty. Let rain become too rare, and civilization disappears under sand, as in Central Asia; let it fall too furiously, and civilization will be choked with jungle, as in Central America. Let the thermal average rise by twenty degrees in our thriving zones, and we should probably relapse into lethargic savagery."

Basically N America is today just as tropical as S America. Maybe more so. Your houses are heated and cooled. So are your cars. And schools. And churches. And shopping centers. And factories.

Abraham Lincoln's character was forged in a log cabin. Ronald Reagan's in Hollywood. Considering all, he didn't do half bad as president, which proves that where there's a will, there can be character.

Frankly, I believe that whether we live in N or S America, we're about in the same boat. If we are to be men and women – or better, MEN and WOMEN – of character, we're going to have to chuck the auto-pilot out of the window and keep the sun and the stars in view. Without a conscious effort to survive, we will atrophy, degenerate into a race of pygmies. ▲

Essay

Central Heating

Winters are changing.

Back in the days before there was a windchill factor, before builders got around to putting insulation in the walls of two story wooden country houses, winter was winter.

Are you old enough to remember a winter evening while a blizzard was raging? With

a rattling of milk pails, dad would come onto the back porch, stomp his feet, remove his overshoes, and the kitchen door would open. With steaming breath he would burst in, covered with a fine layer of snow. First the gloves were tossed on the floor. Then, with stiff purple hands, the heavy woolen cap was removed. Next came the coat, that was hung on a peg in the corner.

“Whew!” he would exclaim. “This is a bad one. The thermometer is at 10 below and falling steady.”

Then dad would head for the old woodstove in the dining room and spread out his iced hands, slowly turn around, trying to get some heat into his chilled blood.

After putting some wood into the stove, the old oak table was pulled nearer. Soon a simmering kettle of soup with a laddle sticking out was sitting in the middle, on the checked oil cloth, a fresh loaf of bread was being sliced, the jam and butter along side, eager to contribute their part. After the bowls and silverware were set, everyone would take their place, and with bowed head, hear dad thank the Lord for health, food, clothing and shelter.

Conversation during supper would drift from one thing to another, but inevitably come back to the storm:

“Just listen to that wind!”

“What do you think the roads will be like by morning?”

“We have a plenty of firewood, don’t we?”

“Do you suppose the calves will be all right in a storm like this?”

After the supper dishes were cleared away, dad would sit by the fire reading, the children would play a game in front of the fire, and sitting in the rocker, mom’s knitting needles would click furiously as she tried to finish a pair of warm socks for dad to use in the morning.

After feeling the house shudder with an especially strong gust of wind, everyone would look at dad. He would get up and look at the thermometer. “Fourteen below,” he would solemnly announce. The chairs were pulled in just a bit closer to the fire.

Oh, how the wind did howl! Beginning at a low note, it would steadily rise until hitting a piercing shriek. The house would again shake. Then suddenly, as though out of breath, for a few brief moments, all would be silent. The next moment it would appear a sledge hammer had hit the house. Once again the family would look at dad. And the chairs would come forward another inch or so.

In spite of being close to the fire, everyone’s feet began to get cold. A cold draft was coming under the door that opened to the front porch. A trickle of fine snow was edging in, lying unmelted on the floor. Mom would get rugs to be rolled up and laid against the door sill. That would help. Some at least.

To get up and walk a yard or two away from the warm little circle made one feel like he had stepped into a freezer. At that distance, air exhaled was immediately converted into a small vapor trail. Really, it was very cold. More wood was put in the stove. The chairs were again drawn in just a bit.

And the windows! They became thicker and thicker. Come morning, it would take

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considerable blowing just to make a small peephole to see the white world the night had created. But for now, as the wind howled louder, the windows got thicker, and the temperature continued to plummet - 16 below. The chairs once more scraped forward.

Until the end of the blizzard, life will center around the fire. Dad will leave the house to do chores, but that's about it. With the roads blocked, no one will be going anywhere.

The wind continues to wail and moan, to shriek and howl. The house shudders. More wood is placed on the fire. It is now cherry red. And yet the chairs slowly move forward.

All that has changed. Blizzards really aren't blizzards like they used to be. Winter isn't winter - at least not like it used to be.

The old two story frame country house without insulation was substituted by an insulated one story house with a full basement. In these new houses the wind doesn't howl as loud. There are no drafts under the front door. The double windows don't freeze over like the old ones. And no one sits around the fire because the whole house is warm.

The living room is warm.

The dining room is warm.

The kitchen is warm.

The bedrooms are warm.

The basement is warm.

Even the car garage is warm.

The house no longer shakes in the wind. Dad sits at the dining room table reading the paper. Mom is in the kitchen talking on the phone. Susie is in her room reading a book. John is downstairs playing with his electric train. Baby Judy is in the bedroom sleeping in her crib. Outside there is a 36 below chill factor.

About 9 o'clock in the morning the snow plow comes by. Everyone heads for the garage. When comfortably seated in the car, dad presses a button on his automatic garage opener, starts the car, turns on the heater, and backs out. From in the car he closes the garage door. In a nice warm car they drive 15 miles to the nearest shopping center. They park around 150 feet from the front door. Finally they must leave the warmth of the car and make a dash to the mall. Once they get inside, it feels just like home. While mom buys groceries, dad wanders off to the hardware section. The children look at the toys. Outside the wind chill factor is up to 30 below.

By noon everyone is hungry. This time it takes only a 30 foot dash to the door of the restaurant. Inside everyone removes their wraps. No point in getting sweaty. The meal is good. The wind chill factor now stands at 27 below.

About 3:30 in the afternoon, dad gets into the car and runs down to the coffee shop for a doughnut and cup of coffee. And mainly to talk to his buddies who head in the same direction at about the same time everyday. It is so cozy that when he looks at his watch, it is 5:00. He decides to head for home. The wind chill factor is still hanging around 27 below.

That evening during supper Susie comes up with the idea that they should go visiting at her friend's house. Dad says he has been gone all day and would like to spend an evening at home. Susie pouts, "I can't understand why we can never go away."

Dad gives in. "Ok, ok, we'll go for just an hour." They stay until 11:00. The wind chill factor is back at 32 below when they drive into their heated garage.

It is amazing what central heating will do, isn't it? Really when you stop and think, even more amazing is what it can't do. It can't bring people together. Rather it scatters them all over the place. The old wood stove had more central heating to it than central heating does.

Am I suggesting we go back to wood stoves?

No, no.

Of course not.

This is a parable. ▲

Religion

Carnival

Carnival is technically a religious holiday. Mardi Gras, its congener in New Orleans, is but a shadow of what occurs over all of Brazil.

During soccer games, Brazilians turn into fanatics. During carnival they turn into pagans.

What is carnival?

Catholics world over place a special importance on lent, which begins on Ash Wednesday, 40 days before the Lord's crucifixion. During lent an effort is theoretically made to live a good moral life, plus doing penitence to get in good standing with the Lord. For some this means eating no meat during the entire 40 days. For others it means not eating meat on Fridays. And for others it is something else.

Since penitence is a means of buying divine favor, it is good business to hit lent with as many sins as possible.

That is what carnival is all about. It's a last minute bash, a mixture of modern immorality with ancient African paganism, before lent.

Carnival begins on the Friday or Saturday preceding Ash Wednesday and runs through Tuesday night.

Since Carnival is of the pit, without even the slightest redeeming value, it operates exclusively at night. During this period people sleep during the day. Around 10 o'clock at night the foliões (those who take part) begin making their way to the clubs (for rich people) or streets where they have carnaval de rua (for the poorer folks).

The larger cities have what they call escolas de samba. These escolas prepare elaborate floats, complete with hundreds of costumed actors, who vie for first place in the judging contests. Rio de Janeiro, the sin capitol (Hollywood) of Brazil has the most famous escolas de Samba. Next is Salvador.

A peculiar characteristic of carnival is the music. It is a wild, highly rhythmic sound

produced by drums and other instruments, that hypnotizes the foliões. In a stupor, they will dance until literally unable to continue. Alcoholic beverages and drugs are consumed wholesale.

The imorality goes beyond words. To say they become as animals would be an offense to the animal kingdom. Carnival can best be described as a national orgy.

Do all Brazilians take part? Of course not. Unfortunately, anyone who has his television turned on during these days, or nights, rather, will see what is going on. What makes it bad is that carnival is a recognized national holiday. Banks and public offices close Friday afternoon, only to open again Wednesday noon.

Fortunately no one is obligated to take part in carnival. I believe there are many Brazilians who feel a total abhorrence for this pagan holiday. By not traveling and staying out of town at night, we on the Colony are likewise isolated from this pagan holiday. Our heart bleeds for those who are drawn into its clutches. ▲

Rio Verdão Bridge Accident

By Mim Burns

Before Mim begins telling her story, I'd like to give a bit of information for the benefit of the readers who haven't heard about this accident.

It happened on August 12, 1988. Leo Dirks went to Goiânia to get Jair & Connie da Costa and son Rodney, age 10 weeks, from the airport, after having spent some time in the US. The accident occurred while returning to Rio Verde that night.

The Rio Verdão river is approximately 150 yards wide. During the dry season, the water is not over three feet deep below the bridge, but due to rapids, very swift. The distance from the bridge to the water is possibly 30 feet.

By the laws of chance and logic, no one should have survived. However the laws of God are superior and there were no fatalities. It is to show His greatness that this story is told:

The children and I were at home getting supper. We had the house tidied up for when Leo and Jairs would get here. We figured the latest they would get home would be at 10 o'clock. But they didn't come and didn't come.

Finally around 11 o'clock we heard a pick-up. The children were all excited, but I could tell right away it wasn't our pick-up.

It was Glenn and Elizabeth. Glenn began, "Ah, we came to tell you Leo called to say they wouldn't be out tonight."

"Jair's plane was delayed again?" I asked.

"No... They're in town."

"In town?!"

"Yeah, they had a little accident. They're all in the hospital. They drove off the Rio Verdão bridge. They are all going to be OK, but had to stay in the hospital."

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They left and I tried to compose myself. I sent the children to bed. Then I sat down to read my Bible. I remember I read the verse that says, “It is of the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed.”

Then here came another car and I thought “Oh no!” I just couldn’t imagine such an accident without something really serious happening.

It was Denise, Mrs. Fred Dirks. She got out of the car and I said, “What can I do for you?”

She said, “I came because I felt so sorry for you.”

This made me suspicious. I asked, “Why?” Reason told me that if someone had gotten worse, Denise wouldn’t have come down alone to tell me, but we can’t always be reasonable at such times.

Denise continued, “Fred thought surely you would want to go in.” I did!

We took the children to Freds and bedded them down. Then Fred took Pancho and me to town. Leo looked cold, shook up and sore.

He told me the story.

They left the airport and headed home about sundown. Since the Rio Verdão River is around a hundred miles from Goiânia, they got to it in the dark. As they came down the hill to the bridge, a truck was coming towards them and didn’t dim it’s lights. Leo was totally blinded. He couldn’t see the bridge at all. He pulled over towards the shoulder to be as far from the truck as possible. Because of this, he hit the cement base of the guard rail.

The tire – or tires – blew. Loosing control, the car hit the guard rail full force, flipped upside down, and slid along on its top for approximately 50 feet, shearing the cement guard rail as it went.

Finally it went over the edge, landing on its side in meter deep water. The strong current flipped the car on its wheels as it washed it under the bridge, where it came to a stop.

In the almost total darkness, Leo’s first thought was, “This is it.” But then as it became apparent the car had stabilized, at least temporarily, he thought, “I’m still alive!” Water gushed into the broken windshield and filled the car.

Jair and Leo crawled out through the broken windshield and tried to get Connie out of the back seat. Leo had her arms and Jair her legs. But she wouldn’t budge. The moon wasn’t out and they had to work by very dim starlight, which hardly made its way under the bridge.

Finally they discovered she was tangled in her seatbelt. Once they had her head out of the windshield, Jair steadied her. She was conscious, but in shock. Leo began to search for Rodney. Crawling over the top of the car, he made his way to the back and got in through the hatch. He began to feel around and finally felt him under about a meter of water.

When Leo got him out, he wasn’t breathing. Holding him upside down, he removed what water he could from his respiratory system and then began giving him artificial respiration. After what seemed an eternity, Rodney began breathing.

Leo thought he should go for help, so he headed out toward the bank. For a little ways the water was only knee deep, but suddenly he hit a deep hole and the current pulled him under. So treacherous was the current that he was unable to swim out.

Held under the water in this tenacious grip, Leo felt his strength oozing. When it seemed his lungs would burst, he remembered those in the car. That thought brought him several extra seconds – enough to free himself from the current’s grip and grab a tree limb. From here he managed to make his way to a small island. Carefully watching his steps, he made his way back to the car.

Meanwhile, up on top, seeing the broken guard rail and the suitcases and other odds and ends strewn around on the bridge, vehicles began to stop.

Ropes were lowered and Rodney was rescued first. Then the others. Placed in different vehicles, they were taken to the hospital.

With a broken pelvis, Rodney’s injuries were the most serious. Young bones mend easily and today he is totally recovered.

Connie suffered back injuries. Although she still feels pain, her recovery has also been miraculous.

The truck driver who directed the rescue work came to the hospital the next day and told of the emotion he felt when Rodney came up and he heard him cry, showing he was alive.

The folks who live near the bridge told them later this was the first wreck of this nature with survivors. They said, “God must have been taking care of you.” He was. ▲

Special Activities

Carnival Children

Seven children from town – or rather, six – had a different kind of carnival this year.

Several weeks before carnival, Laura (the one interviewed in the last issue of Brazil News) was approached by Teresa, the psychologist responsible for a local children’s home. Would she be able to find families on the Colony willing to open their homes to seven of their children during carnival and for a short vacation?

This would keep the boys, ages eight to 18, off the streets, away from television, and in a Christian environment.

Laura did some checking and came up with five families for the seven children. Laura arranged for Leo and Mim Dirks to be in town on Friday evening, February 28, to pick up the children.

Late that night, when the last one was dropped off, things looked like this:

Leo & Mim Dirks kept Jardel, age 11.

Glenn & Elizabeth Hibner kept Júlio.

Dan & Marlene Kramer kept Vinicius, age 15.

Daniel & Anna Kramer kept Ronivom, age 12, and Marcos, age 18.

Tim & Deanna Burns kept Oswaldo, age 12.

Since she wasn't able to find a family for Fábio, Laura took him in.

Now let's take them one by one:

Jardel. (Pronounced Jar-dél) The only problem is that hardly anyone pronounces his name in a normal way once they get to know him. They say, "Oh, Jardeeeeeeeel!!!) If you would have the privilege of being around him for five minutes, you too would say, Jardeeeeeeeel!!!

His skin is darker than the average Brazilian's skin. If you would feel to make unfavorable comments about his looks, feel free. But, never about his intelligence. Jardeeeeeeeel is a genius. And that's the problem. Oh yes, never, never say that Jardel isn't a loveable little chap. He is one nice little guy. And that's part of the problem too.

With his super intelligence, Jardel comes up with novel ways of being naughty. Then, with his super personality, Jardeeeeeeeel oozes his way back out of them.

Sunday morning in Sunday School, Jardel gave his personal version of where rain comes from – which unfortunately I can't print here.

Sunday afternoon was Leo and Mim's turn to go to a poor section of Rio Verde to teach a Bible lesson to the children. Unsuspectingly, they took Jardel along.

Pretty soon Jardel needed to use the restroom. So, OK. But Jardel didn't come back in. Mim saw him heading for a city bus that stopped in front of the building where classes are held.

Mim beat it out and hopped the bus before it could leave. Seeing what was happening, Jardel slipped out of the back door and took out running. By the time Mim told Leo what had happened, Jardel was no where to be found.

Teresa was notified. She notified the authorities. It didn't take any special description. Only, "É o Jardeeeeeeeel."

About five o'clock that morning the police picked him up.

Now what will happen with Jardel?

After Jardel left, Leos took Fábio in, the little boy who was staying with Laura.

Júlio is having the time of his life at Glens. He now knows what it is to ride on a combine, to drive a tractor, and to do a hundred and one things he never had the chance to do before. His latest ambition is to drive truck.

Teresa was a bit worried about letting Ronivom come out to the fazenda. He was a sickly little boy. "Was" sickly. Once he realized how many of his dreams were suddenly coming true, Ronivom left off being sickly. Love continues to be the best cure of many ailments.

Marcos, the 18 year old boy, was raised in an orphanage where things many times weren't easy. Yet, according to Daniel, he shows no self-pity. Rather, he is thankful for what others have done for him. A taciturn boy, he shows some real character.

Vinicius, who stays with Dan and Marlene, is a go-getter. Teresa was hesitant about sending him out because of his tendency to become aggressive when things didn't go his way. Dan reports that he has shown absolutely no aggressiveness. Rather, he is one pleasant little boy to be around. The only very small incident that Dan noticed was one

day when they were ready to pray and Vinicius had forgotten to remove his cap. From behind – and like he would have done with his own boys – Dan flicked the cap off. Like a flash Vinicius turned to face his adversary. Seeing who his “adversary” was, just that quick he wilted down and everything was OK.

Vinicius also likes to drive tractor. So one day, when no one was watching, he tried his hand at backing in circles with the grain trailer. The result was a bent PTO shaft. That taught him a better lesson than a lot of words could have.

I asked Vinicius this morning if he was anxious to get back to town. Real quick like he informed me that he and Ronivom are going to hide in the soybean field when that time comes. Don’t be surprised if that is exactly what happens.

Oswaldo, who stays with Tim and Deanna, is a nice, good looking little boy. When I got there this morning to interview him, Tim had left, but he was out putting wet rice on the slab to dry in the sun. He didn’t even want to stop work to talk to me.

Obviously these little boys have picked up undesirable traits. Oswaldo is no exception. Without permission, he took out for Mom’s place to go swimming in her pond. When Tim got there and saw what was going on, he sneaked up to the pond’s edge and watched his chance. Without bothering to remove even his shoes, Tim made a huge leap into the pond, landed next to Oswaldo, and held him under water long enough to remember how pleasant a gulp of air can be. Then the two of them left the pond together. Tim explained that if he would have asked, he could have gone swimming, but never again to try such a stunt. Lesson learned.

Next month I should have a few more comments to make about this. Maybe even about Jardeeeeeee!!!. ▲

Tapirs and Wild Pigs

A (True) Story

Daniel Kramer told me this little story this morning.

“Zé Mandioca”, the neighbor who lives on the other side of the river from Daniels, has been telling about a tapir (World Book explains what a tapir is) that made friends with a wild pig. According to Zé Mandioca, they’re actually going steady.

Anyone, including Daniel, knows that tapirs and wild pigs are never buddy-buddy. So he laughed it off.

That is, until one day when Daniel’s son Dan commented, “Dad, on the bottom road I saw some tapir tracks and right along side the biggest wild pig tracks you have ever seen in your life.” Laugh that one off.

Daniel checked it out and there it was just as plain as day. The wild pig’s footprint was as big as the palm of his hand! Whew!

Needless to say, Zé Mandioca’s credibility mushroomed on the Kramer side of the river.

Daniel did some more investigating and found where the tapir and the wild pig had eaten green corn.

Then one evening, during harvest, about dark, Daniel and several of his boys were around the grain wagon, when suddenly Dan said, “Shhhh! See that?” There at the edge of the corn field was one of the most enormous wild hogs any human being has ever laid eyes on in this neck of the woods – or maybe in the whole world.

Plans were immediately made to bag this McGuinness wild pig. So as not to scare it by starting the truck motor, by hand they pushed it into position so that the headlights would shine on the pig. Battle stations were taken with one man at the light switch of the truck and Jeff aiming into the darkness with a gun they somehow came up with.

Then it happened. The headlights flooded the area with light. Jeff turned his artillery on the now visible McGuinness wild pig, and BANG.

Neither the bullet nor the scare of facing the Kramers head-on dropped the specimen dead in its tracks. Most unbelievably, it took out running.

Daniel, the eternal hunter, beat it home to fetch his dogs and flashlights.

When they got back, the dogs immediately picked up the trail. It soon became evident that the pig was right close by. With the dogs hot on McGuinness’s trail, Daniel, John and Jeff went charging after the dogs.

The first to bow out was Daniel. After all, you can only huff and puff so much before something gives.

The two younger generation Kramers stayed on the trail, over hill and over dale, with the dogs yelping it up. About as suddenly as it began, it all stopped – near a pigpen.

Alas, McGuinness was nothing more and nothing less than the landlady’s huge bore that had picked the Kramer corn field as the best place to supplement its diet on little evening forage runs.

So ends...

Hold it. And the tapir? Coincidentally it chose the same cornfield for its midnight snacks. And sometimes they shared the same path.

Please, Zé Mandioca, no more of your stories. Daniel can take only so much. ▲

Emma Burns’ Diary

Experiences

Wed – August 14, 69

We want to Manoel’s fazenda. They picked a lot of oranges and tangerines to give us. Charlie shot a seriema (what we call small ostriches). It should make good soup.

Sat – Aug 16

Denton got home at 2:00 a.m. from the port at Santos. John and Eldon were coming back in their pickup, bring the shipping crate back.

Mon – Aug 18

Dicks, Timothy and Charlie went to Manoel's fazenda to get manure to put on our garden. Charlie shot a deer. So we will all enjoy deer meat.

Thu – Aug 19

Alma and I cut up our share of deer meat. Then I put two posts in the ground, strung the meat on a wire and tied it to the posts. Underneath I built a small fire. Once it was going I put a green branch on it to create smoke. That is the only way we have to keep meat.

When Denton and Dick went to São Paulo, they brought back a Cinva-Ram machine to make building blocks. We use 90% moist dirt and 10% cement. That is mixed together and pressed in the machine under very high pressure. It makes strong blocks. We made 80 blocks today. It is slow as everything is done by hand, even the machine is run by hand. We set up the machine near the large falls [on what is now Daniel Kramer's place].

Wed – Aug 20

We have to go to the woods often to get wood to burn in our woodstove. Manoel burned off his pastures today. We had to backfire to keep things from burning around the house. The flames were so high that night that everything was bright.

Thu – Aug 21

We went to the woods for more firewood. The fire didn't go very far into the woods. However, at places the fire was still burning.

Sat – Aug 23

Alma and the girls washed again. We have a very large tub that looks like a huge washpan. We put the clothes and water in it and stomp the clothes with our feet. The clothes get real clean. I washed nine and a half years like this before I had a machine to wash with in the States. John and Eldon got home from Santos.

Sun – Aug 24

Dicks got poles from the woods and made a frame and rafters. Then they put a clay tile roof on it. That is where we had services today. The floor is of gravel. John preached with jeans on today.

Mon – Aug 25

John left after breakfast to get settled in their new home. A small house made out of plywood, covered with a tile roof.

Tue – Aug 26

Cleaned up the tent. Charlies will be sleeping in it since Johns moved out.

This & That

The American Colony was both surprised and pleased with the weekend visit of Mr. Bill Wilkins, Vice-Consul from the US Embassy in Brasília. In our Sunday evening service, he gave an interesting talk on his consular activities. He made visits to different homes. He too shares the view that Brazil is over the hump on its economical problems.

Albert Penners and children returned to Canada.

After being here for several weeks, Victor Isaacs returned to Canadá. Unfortunately, their daughter Corrine, who was teaching in the Rio Verdinho School had to go too. Problems arose on her temporary visa and the only solution was to leave the country. I heard talk that maybe if things work out in the next month, she will be back to finish this term. Doreen Koehn is substituting for her.

Rosella Yoder was here for a visit last month.

Ed & Theda Becker and Willard & Clara Holdeman were here for a visit.

Controversial ex-president Jânio Quadros died.

We ran into unexpected problems with Bruce, the little boy Bradley and Joleen hope to adopt. The mother decided she wanted him back. If she can prove to the judge that she is able to take care of him, she will be able to keep him. We haven't given up hope, even though it looks difficult now.

The Senior Citizens supper was served by Junior sewing girls. Uncle Eds and Uncle Willards and Victor Isaacs were the special guests.

Betty Loewen replaced Charlene Souto on the Monte Alegre Junior Sewing Committee.

The Rio Verdinho congregation had communion after a series of meetings with ministers Kenneth Smith and Ron Wohlgemuth.

In the Rio Verdinho congregation, Errol Redger was ordained to the diaconry. This certainly will lighten the load for Enos Miller, the other deacon.

The Rio Verde congregation had communion. So far as who the ministers were, it started out with Linford Holdeman and Wayne Amoth. Then the Rio Verdinho staff had some meetings with them. Finally Kenneth Smith and Ron Wohlgemuth were there for communion.

Cláudio Silva had surgery and will be laid up for a while.

Corn harvest on the Colony is about over. Yields are exceptionally good and the price is the best ever. Hopefully next month I can give more specific information on yields and prices. Soybean harvest should begin within a month.

Glenda Loewen had gall bladder surgery in Goiânia – the fast kind.

Duane Holdeman injured his thumb in the grain auger and had to spend a couple of days in the hospital.

TIME magazine had an article on the VEJA magazine (circulation 900 thousand), praising it for the important role it is playing in exposing corruption in government circles.