

(Insert, Book 1, page 114)

Manila Fifty-five Years Ago - In revising the first draft of these early chapters on my life in the Philippines, I feel that I should have said something more than I did about the Manila of that time. When I first arrived, early in 1917, it was a relatively small, compact, well-planned, and beautiful city, clean and orderly, of some 300,000 people, as compared to the 3,000,000 population in the Greater Manila area today[#]. It was easy to get around by streetcar, calesa, or caromata, and there were also taxis and automobiles, though in no great number. Most of the streets were wide enough for those days, many of them tree-lined, and well-drained. The old Spanish esteros had not yet been clogged up or built-over. There was no traffic problem. And the people in the provinces were for the most part contented enough, they were not flocking to Manila in large numbers hoping to better themselves but ending up, as today, as miserable squatters in unsightly shacks in vacant lots all over the city. Justo Lucban was Mayor.

The short and narrow, but brilliant Escolta, Plaza Santa Cruz and Plaza Goite, and the immediately surrounding blocks, the Binondo district, formed the main business and amusement center, - the principal business offices and banks, stores of every kind, restaurants, and moving-picture and vaudeville theaters were almost all there. The residential districts, Ermita, Malate, Paco, Santa Ana, Pasay, on the south side of the river, and the older Quiapo, San Miguel, and Sampaloc districts on the north side, were all within easy riding or even walking distance. Tondo, one of the oldest parts of the city, but mainly a nipa-house

[#] The population of the Philippines in 1917 was estimated at 10,000,000; today (1972) the population stands at around 38,000,000.

district, lay somewhat farther off on the shore of the Bay north of the river mouth. There were only four bridges across the Pasig in or near Manila, - the Jones, Santa Cruz, Colgante (now Quezon), and Ayala bridges.

A center of interest, especially for visitors from abroad, was medieval Intramuros, with its parapetted walls, bastions, and ravelins, sculptured gates, and historic Fort Santiago; its Cathedral and many romanesque churches, convents, and schools; its narrow streets and close-built houses with their overhanging second stories, their sliding shell-windows, inner courts, and azoteas; the old Ayuntamiento and the Intendencia[#] buildings where many of the government offices were housed and in the former of which the House of Representatives held its sessions, and in the latter, the Senate; its several intriguing plazas and historic monuments; and then, outside the walls, the well-kept sunken gardens which were once a part of the city moat, and, farther out, the broad and beautiful open park, the Luneta (not spoiled as today by too many lights), with its fine drive from leafy Bagumbayan and along the Bay shore to Dewey Boulevard, much shorter than now. To one side, not far from the Port Area, where there were as yet no large piers, stood the fine, government-owned Manila Hotel and on the opposite side the sizeable Army and Navy and the Elks Club buildings; across the street from the latter stood the tall, privately-owned Luneta Hotel.

I do not remember that there were many large modern buildings at that time other than the Masonic Temple on the Escolta, which housed the Philippine National Bank on the ground floor, the Chinese-owned Chaco building on Plaza Cervantes, and the Kneidler building off Plaza Goite, all

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The Intendencia Building - At the beginning of the Japanese attack on the Philippines, the Intendencia building housed the Mint as well as the Philippine Treasury, as also the Auditor's office. The building was partly destroyed by a bombing on Saturday, September 22. See my book, "The Japanese Occupation of the Philippines", Vol. I, pages 3 and 86.

downtown, and, along Taft Avenue, the Philippine Normal School and Normal Hall, the Philippine General Hospital complex and the nearby College of Medicine and other buildings of the University of the Philippines and the Bureau of Science building. The main Protestant church was the Episcopal Cathedral of St. Mary and St. John on Calle Isaac Peral. It occurs to me now that those buildings were rather typical of the early American period in Philippine history. I think the Insular Cold Stores Building on Plaza Lawton, near the present Post Office Building was there, too. Lately, I learned that it carries a date on the facade, - ~~1899~~ A.D., MDCCCXCIX (1899).

Malacanan (the spelling at that time), the residence of the American Governor Generals, as formerly of the Spanish, was situated on Aviles Street, near the river bank, where it stands today, but there was only the Palace, smaller than now, and there were no other executive buildings on the grounds. And there were no guards other than a solitary American policeman stationed at the entrance which led to the grand stairway to the second floor.

The city, and in fact the whole country in 1917 was for the most part quiet and peaceful, despite the distant war in Europe. There was neither radio nor television, and the movies were still silent. There was no air transport. Law and order was preserved in the city by a largely Filipino police headed by an American chief, and in the country as a whole by the small but efficient Philippine Constabulary, also headed by an American. There was only a small U.S. Army and Philippine Scout Force, headquartered in Fort Santiago, and there were also largely undeveloped U.S. Navy stations at Cavite and Olongapo. I arrived in Manila shortly after the United States had become involved in the war, and soon the Philippine National Guard was being organized to assist the American war effort, which, however, never saw service. Harrison was Governor General and the Jones Act

of 1916, which granted the country considerable autonomy, had come into effect. Politically, everything was quiet and friendly, with but little party conflict. Trouble, and I may say, some wholesome trouble, did not arise until 1920 under Harrison's successor, General Leonard Wood.

During my first three years in the Philippines, served in the Bureau of Education, I had found the country, with its richly varied population groups, in various stages of culture, of absorbing interest, and when I came to edit the Manila Times in 1920 I found the cosmopolitan city very much to my taste. I had come to love the Filipino people and felt myself deeply concerned in the national development. I had married into the country and decided to live my life ~~there~~, - and have until now, despite hell and high water.