



Yesterday in Mexico: A Chronicle of the Revolution, 1919-1936

John W. Dulles

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Early in a sixteen-year sojourn in Mexico as an engineer for an American mining company, John W. F. Dulles became fascinated by the story of Mexico's emergence as a modern nation, and was imbued with the urge to tell that story as it had not yet been told—by letting events speak for themselves, without any interpretations or appraisal.

The resultant book offers an interesting paradox: it is “chronicle” in the medieval sense—a straightforward record of events in chronological order, recounted with no effort at evaluation or interpretation; yet in one aspect it is a highly personal narrative, since much of its significant new material came to Dulles as a result of personal interviews with principals of the Revolution. From them he obtained firsthand versions of events and other reminiscences, and he has distilled these accounts into a work of history characterized by thorough research and objective narration.

These fascinating interviews were no more important, however, than were the author's many hours of laborious search in libraries for accounts of the events from Carranza's last year to Calles' final retirement from the Mexican scene. The author read scores of impassioned versions of what transpired during these fateful years, accounts written from every point of view, virtually all of them unpublished in English and many of them documents which had never been published in any language.

Combining this material with the personal reminiscences, Dulles has provided a narrative rich in its new detail, dispassionate in its presentation of facts, dramatic in its description of the clash of armies and the turbulence of rough-and-tumble politics, and absorbing in its panoramic view of a people's struggle.

In it come to life the colorful men of the Revolution —Obregón, De la Huerta, Carranza, Villa, Pani, Carillo Puerto, Morones, Calles, Portes Gil, Vasconcelos, Ortiz Rubio, Garrido Canabal, Rodríguez, Cárdenas. (Dulles' narrative of their public actions is illumined occasionally by humorous anecdotes and by intimate glimpses.) From it emerges also, as the main character, Mexico herself, struggling for self-discipline, for economic stability, for justice among her citizens, for international recognition, for democracy.

This account will be prized for its encyclopedic collection of facts and for its important clarification of many notable events, among them the assassination of Carranza, the De La Huerta revolt, the assassination of Obregón, the trial of Toral, the resignation of President Ortiz Rubio, and the break between Cárdenas and Calles. More than sixty photographs supplement the text.

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