

Walking Tour

By GRAYDON HEARTSILL
Photos by Peggie Mazziotta

coming burro-companion. Nero even obtained his own passport, a certificate from the Live Stock Sanitation Commission of Texas.

Mrs. de Mohrenschildt assumed the role of wardrobe-mistress for the expedition.

"We're traveling light," she explained before their take-off in October, "but we must be prepared for both hot and cold weather.

"Except for a pair of wool slacks, socks and helmet and a couple of sweaters, the few things I'm taking are in easy-care Dacron — shorts, slacks and two blouses from the 'Music Man' group I've just finished designing for Justin McCarty's fall collection.

"George's assortment is as limited and Nero's even more so — just a little wool coat. We'll add native Indian clothes as we need them."

Partly business, mostly pleasure — that's the way Mr. de Mohrenschildt describes the adventure.

He'll make archeological studies in the State of Oaxaca, explore oil possibilities in Guatemala, Nicaragua and Panama, investigate mines, prolific in gold and other precious metals, in inaccessible regions of Costa Rica.

Life Magazine and National Geographic have requested a running account in reports and photographs that will chronicle the journey.

Mrs. de Mohrenschildt has promised the McCarty Mfg. firm, Women's Wear and The Times Herald sketches and color notes that transform the picturesque Indian costumes into fresh fashion ideas.

As this story appears in print, the Dallas gypsies are due to be "toughening up" with a preliminary trek through the highlands of Mexico from Torreon. That, they figure, should re-enlist their youthful experiences as Boy and Girl Scouts (and subsequently as adult Scout leaders) so they'll be prepared for the stretches of wilderness and unexplored jungles ahead.

"In this walking trip, you face a glorious experience and one which is not impossible," wrote Gordon Wasson, widely known New York banker and author currently planning to be a member of a professional archeological party which has invited the de Mohrenschildts to join up for some Guatemalan delvings in November. "But it cannot be planned too exactly. At each point you will have to decide what route to take next."

Tentatively, then, the de Mohrenschildt itinerary takes a 3,000-mile meander through Guatemala, San Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama. Then they'll make up their minds whether to add 4,000 miles — and another year — through Peru, Bolivia and Chile.

Closest exploit to the one begun by the Dallas couple was the renowned "Tcheffely's Ride" on which a transplanted English colonel in the '20s proved the stamina of Argentine ponies by riding when he could, and taking to the waterways when his two mounts couldn't penetrate the jungles, from Buenos Aires to Washington.

But he didn't walk it.

