

him, he went ahead with the banquet, only to hear the rifle shots of Villa's attacking forces at the edge of town soon after the old clock in the cathedral tower struck twelve. The general got away, but missed most of his banquet.

Rufe March is authority for this story. At Villa's ranch in Canutillo, Durango, he had a number of pens of fighting chickens which he matched for his own amusement. While showing a visitor these pens, he came to the last one, occupied by an old rooster which had fought many fights and showed the scars of battle. "This is my favorite fighter," Villa said, pointing to the sign over the door of the pen. It read "Woodrow Wilson."

One night, while Villa, Trillo and his bodyguards were sleeping out under the stars, they got into a discussion as to how big and how far away the Evening Star was. Venus had just hung her lantern out in the sky. Trillo, whom Villa always called Mike, said he thought the star was as big as El Paso.

"No, you're wrong as usual, Mike," Villa said. "It's about as big as Chihuahua."

Villa turned to an American who was a "guest" in Villa's camp and asked him how big it was.

"Astronomers say it is as big as this earth and a million miles away," he replied, not wishing to get into any argument.

"The next time you see that man whose name you called, tell him that Pancho Villa said he was a lair. If that star was a million miles away, we couldn't see it."

Villa liked American food and often complained because he could not get it when in the field. Canned asparagus was his favorite dish and his cook, an Italian named Pascual Cissereta, was arrested by Department of Justice agents near Fabens when Villa was in Juarez while attempting to smuggle a half-dozen cans of asparagus across the river to Villa's camp.

Contrary to the general belief, Villa never drank. In all of my experience with Villa I never saw him take a drink. But I did see him horsewhip

one of his soldiers for coming out of a saloon drunk during a battle. Villa never permitted liquor in his camp and the only time he would tolerate drinking in his army was after a long, hard battle and his men sought relaxation from the strain of battle.

Rebel Chief Had Few American Friends

Villa never had much use for Americans and had very few friends among the border Americans, although many bragged that they were close to Villa. John Bascom, a former customs broker here, who died several years ago, was one of Villa's closest friends. When Villa's men were holding up trains and robbing and killing passengers, Villa gave Bascom a secret signal to shout in case he should be caught by one of Villa's men. Bascom said he never had to use it, but always felt safer when traveling Villa's country.

In justice to Villa, Martin Lopez was credited with having originated the plan of attacking passenger trains, robbing and killing the men passengers, taking the clothing of women and children passengers from them. I saw a train come into Juarez with all the windows broken, the floor of the second-class car covered with blood of victims and the poor peon passengers wrapped in blankets and wearing old clothes furnished them by charitable people of Chihuahua City after they had been stripped of their clothes by Lopez's crew.

One time Villa was placing an order for uniforms for his officers and ordered the showiest ones with the most gold braid for his secret service men.

Yet he had one of the shrewdest, cleverest secret service operatives with him during the last three years of his operations Mexico has ever produced. He is Senor Gomez M., now stamp collector in Juarez. Gomez M. made many trips to Washington for Villa, brought a message to Gen. J. B. Erwin from Felipe Angeles, following the last attack on Juarez and rendered valuable service to Villa in gathering information from within the enemy lines in Mexico. The most remarkable part of it was that Senor Gomez

M. does not speak English, yet he made his way across the border, delivered Villa's messages and returned with the replies without having been arrested.

Later, when Gomez M. became a member of Congress, he denied a statement that Americans were all grafters by citing the fact that, when he was detained at Marfa, and was forced to leave hurriedly without a money belt containing a large sum of money, an American army plane followed his car to the border and dropped the money to him in a sack of sand.

Fearful His Enemies Would Poison Him

Villa had an obsession that his enemies sought to poison him. He would eat with different men of his command almost every meal, would never eat twice in the same place and was always suspicious of the food served to him after he had captured a town and ordered some native family to cook for him. Once in Jimenez, he grew suspicious of the dinner cooked for him, ordered the head of the house to eat some of it first and, when he refused, hanged the entire family.

Villa's aversion to Chinese was due to the fact that he felt the Chinese in Mexico were intermarrying with the Mexican people and he said they would soon produce a race of half-breeds. When he was especially bitter toward Americans, he would refer to them as "Chinos blancos" or "white Chinese."

Many as were the killings directly due to Villa, many were charged against him when he was miles away. No evidence was ever developed that he was present at Santa Ysabel massacre when Charlie Watson and 21 others were killed while fleeing from a train going to the Cusi mine.

Villa admired bravery wherever he found it. One day, at the Cusi mine, Villa ordered a Mexican miner shot. The man wore a good suit of clothes and Villa commanded him to remove them and give them to one of his men who was ragged. The man, angered by this last humiliation, snatched off his coat, threw it at Villa and told him