

Selga, Miguel: Report of a party that visited Taal Island in 1937 and swam in the crater lake.

While I was working in the parochial archives of the town of Taal in 1941, I met two Redemptorist Fathers who were giving a mission to the people of Taal. From them I learned that a party from the Redemptorist house at Lipa, Batangas, called Monasterio del Divino Amor, had visited Taal Volcano in 1937. Upon my request, Rev. J. A. O'Donnell, C.S.S.R., who took part in the excursion, kindly wrote the following account of the trip to Taal volcano and the swim of some of the members of the party across the lake in the central crater. The letter of Rev. J. A. O'Donnell, dated at Lipa on April 9, 1941 reads as follows:

"The party consisted of six priest including myself and two brothers. Dr. Semeón Luz, of Lipa, also came with us and acted as our guide. The purpose of the trip was entirely recreational. We intended to do some fishing in ~~the~~ lake ~~and~~ Taal in the morning and during the afternoon we hoped to do some shooting on the island, as we were told there were many wild chickens there. The day chosen for the trip was the 1st of April 1937. All went according to schedule. We left Balete on the eastern shore of the lake at about 9 am. Traveling by motor launch we were soon half way across to the island. At this point we decided to do some fishing, but as the fish refused to be tempted, we pushed on towards the island, arriving about 11 am. Whilst the rest of the party decided to go shooting, Fr. English and myself took a walk to see the crater. In about twenty minutes we were on the rim of the crater. From this point the crater appears almost circular and is about a quarter of a mile across. The bottom of the crater is almost entirely filled with water, forming a small lake. The slope from