

13

L-10
p1

Lagos, Nigeria; November 20, 1942

Dear Folks:

It has been just exactly 11 months today since I arrived in Nigeria, and I am glad to say that I have not been feeling any ill effects of the sojourn. Since I left the hospital, I have felt better really than I did before; I think it must have been building up on me for some weeks. We are getting back into the hot season now, and I must admit that it is very unpleasant. In some ways it seems hotter than when I first came, although we have not yet reached the peak. We do not have a thermometer here in the office, and I think it is a good thing; otherwise, everyone would be watching it and feeling sorry for themselves all the time. As I explained before, the actual temperatures in the shade are not so high, but with the never-ending humidity it makes a pretty bad combination. The temperature runs between 85 and 90 during the day, and it remains hot during most of the night. I have the fan on every night now.

Friday the thirteenth certainly lived up to its reputation this year. On that day we received a cable from the Department stating that a consul, Andrew Lynch, now at Montreal, ~~xxxxxx~~ was assigned to this office, and that Mr. Shantz should select one of the Vice Consuls for assignments at Accra. McSweeney was, of course, selected, because of the fact that Philinda was coming out; also, being the senior officer, I was given first chance to express my desires, which were to stay here. Mac will probably leave about the first of December unless his departure is delayed by a trip which Mr. Shantz is planning to make into Northern Nigeria.

I will miss Mac very much, as we have been a very good team here. We have never had a personal trouble, and we hold all our groceries and liquor in common. We live in a sort of college-boy communism, with free exchange of clothes, cigarettes, etc. He is good about the office, and his departure will leave me with a lot of unpleasant details, like the accounts, to handle, at least until the new consul arrives. Besides all the practical considerations, I will miss his company; I certainly hope Philinda will get here soon. Further, the expense of running our house alone will be much heavier, especially since we have just increased all the servants' pay.

I recently got two letters from Philinda at once, both written about the end of last month. She was still waiting for a Portuguese visa, but in a more recent cable, she only spoke of possible difficulty in having her passport validated by the Department, so I hope the visa came through. This morning we got a cable

L-10
p2

through the Department from the Office of War Information for their local representative saying that Philinda was coming out soon and that he might wish to consider employing her locally after her arrival. It does not look from that as if the Department had held up her passport, so I have hopes that she will be on her way before the end of the month. So far I have sent her \$2000 for her transportation, and I hope that will be enough to get her here. She is worth every penny of it and more, but it is certainly a good thing I saved my money when I had a chance; otherwise it would have been difficult. I am afraid that I will not be able to save much from now on, what with the new taxes and getting married and all; moreover, living here is getting more expensive all the time.

One of the regular feature of the week-end now ^{are} our Sunday trip to Tarquah Bay, to the beach shack I wrote you about before (I think) which is now owned by Mr. Shantz. This bay is an artificial one, formed by a breakwater, near the entrance to Lagos harbor. You reach it by motor launch which operates several times daily for military purposes. The government has leased land there to private individuals for a nominal sum a year, and Mr. Jester built a cottage. It is very pleasant to get out of Lagos once in a while, even if it is only a few miles. Since I live in the same building with the office, I don't get much change during the week, and it is good for me to get out and get some sun and exercise. Recently we have been bathing in the ocean, and, when possible, borrowing some surf boards, which are fun because of the rollers coming in from the sea. We usually leave town at 10:30 on Sunday morning, and go swimming immediately on arrival. After an hour or so of this, we return to the shack and have a short drink, lunch, and then sleep most of the afternoon. Some prefer to read, but I take after Daddy. About six p.m. we take the boat back in. One day in October one of the fellows took some pictures of the trip, which I am enclosing, with explanatory notes on the back.

A couple of weeks ago I had my first, and probably last, invitation to Government House, as the office and residence of the Governor is called. Pan American brought the movie "Mrs. Miniver" here, and had a free showing Sunday night. I saw it, but very few of the local people heard about it in time. So they decided to hold it over and have a special showing for the benefit of the soldiers' canteens. And I was invited to attend with the Governor and his party. Although it was an excellent show, I did not care about seeing it twice in three days, but of course you can't refuse the Governor's invitations. The evening was quite dull; the Governor is a very hard person to talk to, and most of the other guests were dull too. It was amusing, however, when they played "God Save the King" as we came in, and everyone had to stand up. The Governor's party also leave the theater first.

I am very hurt that Janie has only written me once since she got married; now I don't even know her address. Please send the address, and also tell her to write in care of the Department, as you do. I hope Grandpa got the wire I sent on his birthday. Much love to you all.