

IN REPLY REFER TO

FILE NO. 1 - March 29



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICAAMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL
Lagos, Nigeria
March 29, 1943

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Dear Family,

Taking the excellent suggestion of William, I am henceforward numbering my letters so you can tell when one is missing, and in case we ever have to emply such subt~~ities~~ as I did in send~~ing~~ my going-away cable to William.

A pouch from Washington arrived to day bearing Christmas presents for William and mother's first letter to me, dated Feb 6th. Still no letters from Pop. Hmm... William and I both greatly enjoyed mother's letter, which was sweet and nice as ever. I was very pleased indeed to get the answer to the Rufus mystery which I first heard about in mother's later letter, which arrived before the first one. I don't think I know anything about this boy Richard Brooke. More power to Young Love, an isstitution of which I am greatly in favor. I have already written to Rufus by the last weekly pouch, asking her what the score was, but shall write again. Referring to mother's remark about writing to Mrs. Bliss, I have already done so- once from Trinidad, twice from here. I have also written to Mr. Johnston and the PAA crowd in Miami. Mr. Lynch, when he arrived, said that on passing through Miami [REDACTED] ago he had spoken to Miss Clevenger, one of my colleagues in the Passenger Service Department, who had asked to be reminded to me. Very nice.

I was interested to read about Dona's thoughts regarding getting into the pulp f~~ield~~ on her own in case of necessity. I'm sure she'd be very good at it- she's been in it for twelve years de facto, as it were! Don't forget to send me some pictures of the baby- Big ones, suitable for framing and hanging on the wall. William and I both get enormous pleasure out of the big one we have now. William has fallen in love with PD from her photograph, like Henry the Eighth and the portrait of Anne of Cleves.

If you were worried about me while I was on the ocean you might get some consolation out of the fact that I was worried myself. We were ~~hax~~ all relieved when I arrived, apparently. That's something I don't want to do agian in a hurry. The very sight of the end of the harbor here and the beginning of the ocean makes me shiver slightly. Although at the time, I ~~hax~~ was enjoying myself reasonably well and keeping the old heart palpitations under control.

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Referring to sending things to us: for the food, the best thing would be to send large amounts through the U.S. Government Despatch Agent, Mr. Fyfe, in New York City. Call him up first, say whom you are sending them to, ask him what to do. However, do this only in the case of large shipments, since from now on we will have to pay duty, since free entry applies only on one's arrival. For sending small items- say unbulky things, weighing less than ten pounds or so wrapped, the thing to do is to address them with a covering letter to Mr. Jester, Division of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State (Mr. Perry N. Jester). He has said he would arrange to have small packages put in the pouch for us, but I notice that Mr. Krieg Senior sent the package of Christmas presents directly to the Dept. of State, Mail and Pouch Section, without further ado. You might mention that to Mr. Perry Jester, and say that since you don't want to bother him further, does he not think that doing it that way, i.e. sending the things directly to the Mail and Pouch Section, would be just as good in future. I suggest that you wrap packages as compactly as possible, and wrap them twice, more or less in the same spirit as you put letters to us in two envelopes, one addressed to the Department, and the interior one addressed to us.

Saturday at two-thirty Bill and I took the Waaf lar (the boat going over to Tarqua), Thompson and sixteen trunks, more or less, accompanying us. Upon arrival at that earthly paradise, we went for a swim, came back to a nice curry lunch, and settled down to reading our books and Magazines. I'm reading a very interesting book with which William and I agree most of the time, entitled "Conditions of Peace", by a professor at the University of Wales, Carr. Very lucid and to the point. We had to borrow some petrol to run the little stove, because the efficient coffee had neglected to provide us with any, so William went over to the neighbors next door, who are Dutch, and asked for some, also inviting them over for drinks after dinner. So we sat under the stars on the terrace and talked up a storm. The Dutch people had been to the US as tourists in 1934. They took a Greyhound bus cruise of six days, seeing Niagara Falls, Detroit (inc. visit to Ford Plant) Chicago, Pittsburg (fascinating!) and back to New York, where they visited the Statue of Liberty, the Empire State, Grant's tomb, and Chinatown. Wonderful, they said. All very quaint to us. The lady said she was enchanted by the big round plates with sections in them, which held a complete meal. He was also delighted by the roadside "bars" (sic) with little stools to sit on and many kinds of ices. Tourist camps were likewise praised. Well, when they went we had a little midnight supper of sandwiches and beer, and talked up a storm all by ourselves. So to bed, under mosquito nets. The next morning Thompson brought me my morning tea as usual, and we had a leisurely breakfast and waited for the regular Sunday party to arrive on the 10:30 Waaf lar. We had had a delightful time.

We went over to the surf bathing beach when Mr. Chantz and party arrived. The surf was high and good, so we all enjoyed it a lot. When we came home, tired, hot, thirsty, we had a buffet lunch because there were too many guests for the table, even with the usual quota of packing-box chairs. Then to sleep again- this time undisturbed by raucous guests. We came home and went to bed early last night.

Last Friday evening I had another fine game of Badminton at the Rasmussen's. Mr. Rasmusson had an operation to remove a wart on his vocal chords, so he couldn't say a word all after-

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noon. You know how silly one immediately becomes when there is someone around with alrangitis (if you can make that word out, congratulations!) It's even sillier when the person can't talk at all. Everyone began to gesture to Mr. Rasmussen, although he can hear perfectly well. Before his operation his voice was very high and squeaky due to the wart. Considering the fact that he is a great big Swede, six foot four, and quite brawny, the voice always sounded most anachronistic. We like the Rasmussen's, and I am dreadfully fond of thier badminton court, so we invited them to dinner and the club next Saturday night. Now we have the problem of finding another lady.

Anita and I played badminton at the Socony Vacuum mess last night after work, but that wasn't as much fun as at the Rasmussens, because the boys go in for long hard sets, which simply do me in. I was exhausted after three games against long, tall men. Anita herself is six feet tall, so I felt like an inefficient pygmy. But Don Huse, the man in charge of Socony, has an excellent collection of swing records, the Pride of Lagos. As a matter of fact, Don puts on what he calls the "Rug-Cutting Programme" over the local station from ten to midnight every Friday. We listen in when we are home, and next Friday are going to the Studio, where they always have a party on Friday nights. The general dullness of the BBC Overseas Service is so extremely unbearable at times, that even the ranks of those who don't like swing often find themselves enchanted by a change of accent and tempo in the local broadcasting.

Mein Kampf with the United Africa Company has begun a new phase. The lovely lamp and shade I managed to get from them after infinite vicissitudes, has come apart completely. It was repaired with hairpins, string, glue, everything ingenuity could think of, but it always leaned drunkenly to one side or the other, and threatened to fall over in the slightest breeze. I sent Thompson down with the shade and a letter to the Manager this morning at ten, and at eleven thirty he still hasn't arrived, which gives you a fair idea of the speed and inefficiency of that great organization, world wide Lever Brothers (Makers of Lux and Lifebouy soap in the US, of the famous "Persil" and Mavel La Croix in France, owners ██████████ to Africa, the US, the Far East, the South Pacific, practical monopolists on the retail goods trade, the soap trade, the electric power and light business, the provisions business on the West Coast of Africa; owners of large plantations in West, East and South Africa; likewise on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands, and probably a great many other places in the world that I haven't heard about yet. Lever Brothers doesn't quite run Nigeria, but almost.) Ah, the superior efficiency of great commercial companies! If they ran that place just a mite less efficiently they would come to a dead standstill, which might be just as well, all things considered.

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Love,
LPK

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April 2, 1943

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Dear Family again,

In order to keep the records up to date, on Wednesday evening we went to dinner once more at Mr. Rooke's house in Ebbutte Metta suburb. Mr. Rooke is Maager of the Nigerian Railway. Large, ruddy, mustachioed, imposing, the British Bulldog type. In a few ways his character reminds me of Mr. Johnston's. He is given to having one general solution to all world problems, to wit: "hoo 'em, Hang 'em!" He is a jolly extrovert of the sweep-all-before-him type, with the result that he is always urging his guests to stay later and "have another for the road, old boy!". Lived for a long time in the Argentine and Malaya, speaks rapid Spanish with a tedddibly British accent which he fondly imagines is pure Argentine. A nice sort of person. The Granthams (Chief Sec'y of Nigeria) were also there, and I had a nice long talk with him at table., Mrs. Grantham was most annoyed because dinner was delayed. The cause of the delay was Captain Harry McGrath (USA) who forgot all about coming to the party. Poor old Harry has china blue eyes and a lot of responsibilities over at the Air Port in Apapa. He is apt to fall asleep at parties because he gets up at four and five in the morning and works straight through the day. Harry was abject, but finally arrived at Mr. Rooke's house. We had a delightful fish course: some kind of white fish cooked in coconut milk with the pulp grated floating in it, and onions and tomatoes, later put under the grill for a few minutes. Lovely! Mr. Rooke likes to cook himself from time to time, wages stormy battles with his cook prepetually.

I forgot to say that on Tuesday evening we went to the Army Barracks in Apapa for dinner with Harry McGrath; ~~and~~ Nick Olivier and Lt. Barry were also present. A movie came first, then dinner in the officer's mess. The movie was pretty bad, but we had some lovely arguments over the real American food. We stopped shouting only when we all fell asleep. I was defending the PAA service as though I were still getting paid for it. Force of habit.

Last night we had firmly detirmined to stay at home, but the Boss invited us to dinner and the Thursday night dance at the Ikoyi Club, so we went with pleasure. A lovely meal, a lovely evening. My, how we are going to miss Mr. Shantz, who is my nominee for the title of the world's nicest Consul General and First Secretary of Embassy!

I have been making and hanging curtains like mad in my spare time, what there is of it. Bill thinks they look very nice, so my efforts are amply rewarded.

We are going to go out to collect William's wedding ring at the Goldsmith's soon. Pay day has arrived. From the time I have been working here, I am sending home \$200 of my pay to be put in an account in the Park National Bank, Newark Ohio.

Love,
LPA