

IN REPLY REFER TO

FILE NO.



AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL
Lagos, Nigeria; July 2, 1943L-235 orig
P1/2

Dear Ninnie and Aunt Vanie,

I honestly don't know how to begin telling you how sorry I am not to have written to you sooner, especially since I heard about Ninnie's fall. I have no really good excuse, and I won't try to make any. Last year we were very busy, and I spent all my spare time writing to Philinda, but you would think I could at least have sent you copies of the few letters I wrote home. I am attaching one of these now, to help catch you up on the background.

Well, a great deal has happened since I last saw you-all. A great war has broken out, I have been in the midst of it in Italy, I have fallen in love, come to the Tropics, and been married. That is quite a lot to pack into a few years. Of all these things, getting married is, of course, the biggest from the personal point of view. I had lived alone for so long I was beginning to doubt whether I would be able to fall in love even if I should chance to meet the girl I considered the right one. These questions are all answered now. I did meet her, and I am still capable of adapting my bachelor life to the requirements of marriage. So far, we have been very happy, and I have every confidence that we will continue to be happy. Philinda is not only a very beautiful girl, she is also a very intelligent one and has a fine personality thrown in. She is a tremendous asset to me, as she has lots of things I lack. I hope very much that we will be able to stop in at Miami the next time we come home.

About coming home, we have no idea when that will be. I will be due for a transfer at the end of this year, but whether I will be able to travel to my new post via the United States is unknowable. Naturally, we have no idea whether we will be able to travel by air or not. As you will see in the following pages, the situation is most unsatisfactory at this time. It is barely possible that we may be able to fly home via Baltimore, but this is very uncertain.

We are going to go on our long-deferred honeymoon on July 12th. North-east of Lagos, on a plateau, is located the town of Jos. Here, the climate comes as close to being that of the temperate zone as anywhere in Nigeria, which isn't saying much. We can go up by train - a two day ride - and we are planning to stay with some people who were friends of my first chief here, Perry Jester. It is said to be very pleasant there, and we will

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get to see some hills - a rare treat, since Lagos is about as hilly as Miami. Usually, it is much drier there, but July is their rainiest month; I hope that it won't be so rainy as to spoil our fun.

June is the wettest month in Lagos, and I think this June has been even wetter than usual. It has been raining about five days a week, and sometimes it starts in the small hours of the morning and continues until evening. It is impossible to plan to go to the beach or the movies or anything else that has to be done out of doors, as the chances are all in favor of its raining. On the average, we have about 19" of rainfall during June; I haven't heard whether this year has been more than the average, but I suspect that it has. In any case, it has been rather depressing, and I hope it will be better up North.

Before I forget, I must tell you how to address your letters if you are able to write to me. I send my letters back to you by State Department pouch, and this can be used also for reply. However, we have found that there is such great delay in handling the mail in the Department that it is much quicker to send letters by Army Post Office. Please address your letters (for I hope there will be several) as follows:

William L. Krieg
American Vice Consul
A.P.O. 606-A
c/o Postmaster, Miami, Fla.

Six cents postage is required. You will note that nothing about Lagos appears on the envelope. I do not think, however, that you have to pretend that you don't know where I am as far as the contents of the letters are concerned. In any case, if I find they are cutting things out, I will let you know.

I don't know whether the folks in Newark have told you that Philinda is working in the Consulate. It was only by taking this job that she was able to get transportation, but she accepted it gladly, as practically all the white women in Lagos do office work anyway. There is a great shortage of women here, and almost any white woman, even though not especially trained, can find a fairly good job. The running of a house doesn't require much attention, as our boys take care of practically everything with a minimum of supervision. I won't deny that they could do with a good deal more supervision, but without it they struggle along somehow. It certainly is nice to be able to have all the heavy work done, and the entire staff, which consists of one steward, one small boy, one cook and one washman (part time) costs about \$38 a month. I'm afraid I am getting spoiled for a normal life; there is no doubt that life in the Tropics has many compensations.

I think it is about time for me to quit and go up-stairs now, as we are expecting guests tonight and I have to take a bath and get dressed. I do hope that you are both well and that things are not going too badly. Please let me hear from you when you can.

With love,

