

IN REPLY REFER TO  
FILE No. 11

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## AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Lagos, Nigeria; August 20, 1943

Dear Folks:

Today is the 20th monthly anniversary (or whatever it is) of my arrival in Lagos. It is a lovely clear day, with a nice cool breeze stirring the branches of the palm trees and blowing gently ~~xxx~~ through the office. If Lagos were always like this, no one would have any complaints.

Daddy's letter of June 29th and Sarah's of July 15th have both arrived. I was sorry to hear that Daddy has lost so much weight, and I think he has been working too hard on the farm. I know how much satisfaction he gets out of that sort of thing, but I think he should be careful about overdoing. After all, no amount of fresh vegetables would compensate for the loss of his health. And the same goes for Sarah, too.

We have been right busy here recently, having recovered from our brief slump. The representative of the Office of Economic Warfare who buzzes around this area has paid us two visits since the last time I wrote, and in between times I have been very busy interviewing African would-be mahogany exporters. It is rather tedious as few of them know as much about exporting as I do (in other words, nothing), and few of them can resist bargaining about the price. We have been unable to get from Washington anything on prices or specifications, and so the whole thing is up in the air. However, the negotiations for strategic minerals has been going much better, and we expect to make a fair sized shipment of a very valuable ore very soon. Philinda is still doing both jobs, and now that she has gotten used to the work, I believe she will be able to handle them without too great difficulty, although it will keep her very busy, what with one thing and another.

Andy Lynch's suggestion that his wife be sent out to replace Anita Price was turned down by the Department. After some initial gloom, however, he arranged for British Airways to give her a job. They can always use more women out here, and the only question was whether they would make an advance offer. They have, and Andy is hoping that the Passport Division will grant his wife's application for a passport. She is working in Washington, but rents are so high that she isn't covering her own living expenses by any means. Andy really needs her here, and I think that the Department should let her come whether or not she has a job. Arranging transportation is always a problem, but there are various routes which might work out. Having been through the whole business with Philinda, I can sympathize with Andy.



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I am sending you a set of photographs taken at the Sala, a great religious and political festival held annually in Kano. At that time, all the subordinate chiefs come to pay homage to the Emir, and they really put on a very good show. Several of them wear chain mail of the type used during the Crusades. Some of these are semi-modern imitations, but some are believed to be genuine relics of that period which filtered down via Tripoli. Throughout the Middle Ages, there was a flourishing trade between Kano and Tripoli. The Hausa traded hides and skins for Arabian and European products. Consequently, European things were not entirely unknown even before the first white man visited the country. They also traded with Morocco, and a great deal of what was known in Europe as "Morocco" leather, actually came from Nigeria.

The pictures were taken last December by a couple of O.W.I. men who visited Kano for the occasion. These pictures are enlargements which were really intended for them, but since they have gone and we are not sure where they are, we decided to keep them. I hope you will circulate them among the family, but please see that they come back as I want them kept as a permanent souvenir of Nigeria.

In answer to an implied question in Daddy's letter, I don't have a camera and therefore don't take any pictures. Up to the present I have always been pretty successful in buying pictures, but film is so hard to get and snapshots are so difficult to transport that few people are taking them.

A week ago today I saw in the radio bulletin from Cairo that I had been promoted, together with the other members of my class, to Class VIII. This will give me \$3500 a year and the possibility of a larger rent allowance when next we go to a post ~~which~~ where we can use one. If promotions could always come as regularly as this, i.e., every two years, I would have nothing to complain about. But the higher you go, the slower the promotion. Taking my salary and Philinda's together, we should do quite well, although costs of living are very high and taxes - you know about.

You asked about the supplies I spoke of ordering from home. I have now received acknowledgments from all the companies. The company from which I ordered food supplies said that of course all the items listed could not be supplied, but they would do the best they could. I have not received a detailed invoice, a bill for insurance or anything else so far. I do hope they will be able to ship them on a reasonably fast ship as it takes forever for the slow ones to work their way around here. I have just received a batch of magazines and letters which were mailed in April and early May. The June magazines arrived considerably ahead of the March ones. Then too, the slower the ship the greater the danger.

I think that will be all for now. Philinda sends her love. We greatly appreciated Melody's nice note enclosed with Sarah's letter, and hope she is doing well. Here's hoping you both keep well!

With love, *William*

THE FOREIGN SERVICE

OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL  
LAGOS, NIGERIA

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L-56

This article originally mailed  
in country indicated by postage.

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AUG 20 4-PM  
1943



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from