

IN REPLY REFER TO

FILE NO. 15

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## AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Lagos, Nigeria; December 3, 1943

Dear Folks,

I enjoyed Sarah's letter of November 11th very much; it arrived yesterday. I am so glad that Grandpa came down to celebrate his and Daddy's birthday in Newark. I do hope he will be alive when Janie's baby comes, as I am sure he will be the happiest man in the whole country the day he becomes a great-grandfather.

I was very sorry to hear that Sarah broke her toe, and I think it was very mean of Dad to go off dancing and leave her on the sidelines. Now I, personally, would probably have been tickled to death to have a chance to get out of dancing. I do hope the toe is much better by this time.

Our lives have been moving along in much the same way as before. This week has been a quiet one. Saturday we went over to the beach earlier than we ever had before - at 12:30 on Saturday - and had lunch there instead of eating at home first. It proved to be a big success. No one else we knew was there that night, so we just sat out on the front porch and watched light clouds scoot in front of the stars. It was really lovely; so much better than going to the dance, staying up too late and perhaps having a hangover the next day. Sunday we had over, besides Bill Bruns and his girl, Pat Thompson, three doctors from the Rockefeller Institute. Two of them are remaining in Lagos to continue their research in yellow fever. They were here before during the twenties and early thirties, and the buildings they built have been used and kept in repair by the local medical department. The other was the head of the whole research staff in Africa, Dr. Mahaffey. He has been living in Kenya for some time but was formerly in Lagos and knows many people here. We liked the doctors very much; they were a jolly addition to the party and we are glad they are going to be in town.

We had a whole succession of quiet evenings at home during the first part of the week, but we had a small party last night and are going out tonight and tomorrow. Naturally, in a town where women are so scarce, Philinda is in great demand, and that largely explains why we are so busy.

Andy Lynch went up to Accra November 22nd, and since then I have been in charge of the office. Perhaps fortunately for me, nothing of tremendous importance has come up. Still, we

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have been quite busy what with one thing are another, and I have enjoyed being my own boss for a change. This is the longest time I have ever been in charge of the office. Officially, of course, Andy is still in charge, as the mechanism for formally turing over the office to someone else is so cumbersome that it is only done when absolutely necessary. After he had been in Accra for a while, we heard that the Consular Agent in Freetown was sick and would not be able to carry out the registration of American males residing abroad who had not previously been registered for the draft. So Andy took off for Freetown, and the last word we had was that he thought he might be delayed there for some little time. A new man is going to relieve Nielsen, the Agent, and as soon as he gets there, Andy will be relieved.

As a matter of fact, it is an excellent idea for some one from here to visit Freetown more often than we have in the past. The last time anyone from this office was there was when Harold Shantz passed through there on his way here in June, 1942. Our knowledge of that area is about nil. I think someone should go up and spend a couple of weeks at least twice a year, if not oftener. The trouble is, Freetown is such a dump nobody wants to go there if they can possibly help it.

Tomorrow a man named MacChesney, the head of the American Economic Mission to Dakar is coming here with his British opposite number. I will put him up in Andy's house even though Andy isn't here, and will do the best I can to see that everything goes smoothly. He will only be here four days. I am hoping that he will arrive in time for lunch, but one never knows when anyone will arrive.

My plans for supplies and things are still confused by not knowing when or where I am going when I leave here. I have received word that my food order has been shipped and with luck will arrive within six weeks. I do not know whether or not I will be here to receive them, but there should be no trouble about disposing of them. I would like very much to have a couple more pairs of those Air-Tex lightweight pajamas if there are still any around. They are far and away the best thing out here, although the cloth is so light they do not last long under the violent ministrations of the washman. Those you sent me last year are already beginning to go, and the ones from the previous year can no longer be worn. We also need some Kolynos toothpaste. The Department still says they will send small parcels by sea pouch. They have made up an instruction sheet showing just what you can send. If you don't have one, I'm sure Perry Jester would be glad to get one and send it to you.

I am most pleased to hear about Mel's successes in the musical world. She certainly is most talented, and I hope the big appearance will be a triumph. I guess that's about all for now. You are both well and send you all our love.

As ever,

