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Dear Family,

Just when William and I were debating whether Pop had cut me off without a shilling or whether on the other hand he had lost the use of both hands and his eyes, his letter of February fourteen arrived. It certainly was a nice letter, and somewhat different than Pop's usual literary style, although I can't exactly analyze how. Perhaps more lyrical, shall we say. William and I both were beginning to make nasty comments on people who urge other people to write often and then don't do so themselves, and people who callously leave other people in deep ignorance of the score at the half on the home front, to mix a few choice metaphors.

Answering Father's specific question promptly, we would love to receive books, but when we would read them is a question which G— alone can answer. We are making concerted and valiant efforts to cut down our social life, but there are still many invitations which simply can't be refused without incurring misunderstandings. When we do get a night off to stay home, we are usually so weary from previous late nights that we go to bed too early to get any serious reading done. We are catching up with Time fairly well— necessary reading, since our only other source of information is the BBC Kindergatren talks for 15 minutes in the morning, which simply must be supplemented by further readings. Beyond that we have been struggling through Conditions of Peace for the past month, and I am only halfway through it even though it is very good indeed and written most interestingly with a humorous, ironic style. We just don't have time. Now I am trying to put up curtains (and have succeeded in putting up and making two out of five) which also cuts into the reading. Maybe things will look up. If you care to be constructive in your book of the year choice I recommend Conditions of Peace, by somebody Hallet Carr. It gives you a good view of current British trends of thought, as we see them here in Lagos, at least. The conservative Briten seems to be in about the same frame of mind as the radical American, and the conservative— American type doesn't seem to manifest himself at all among the British. We both frowned deeply on Time's analysis of the Britisher's attitude toward post war problems which appeared in the first "Background for Peace" section. Bill and I believe that present day Englishmen are tending more and more toward what would be called Rank Red Socialism in the US, and that was more or less the oposite of what Time's Background for peace man said. I think he was expressing an American's attitude toward social measures and not an Englishman's. Well, to return to our sheep, as the French aptly put it, we would like to get books even if they were forced to stay on the bookshelves for months. The way to send them is (cont'd on next page)

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thus: as in the case of letters, via the pouch. The Department will send them over by sea mail in all probability. The same instruction applies to a dress which I have seen in Montgomery Wards new catalogue—white, washable(!!) and apparently fairly pretty. An evening dress, I forgot to add. The number is 914 A 2460, price \$9.98. Size 13 is probably mine. The shipment weight is only 1 lb 2 oz, and you can cram it into a compact package I imagine. Thompson can always iron it when it arrives, so don't worry about that angle. The money to pay for same is, as previously stated, in mother's tender care. I really would like that, if convenient. I should also like dead white (not even slightly creamy) hairbows on combs. And of course the much-be-moaned Griptuth side combs! All small items, easily shipped by pouch. If mother ever runs out of money I will send her some. Speaking of monny, we are all getting the lovely new overtime pay of one third, which raises me by about 23 dollars a month; always welcome, quod!

P.S. Would love John's new Pocket Book edition!!

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I'm glad you had such a nice visit from Ensign Donovan. I liked him a lot, and hope that you did. It was nice of him to bring you the coffee. A very nice gentleman, but a rather sad flop, I am afraid, as a naval officer. Too much of a philosopher in a service that doesn't call for philosophy. I have written him to thank him for bringing the coffee.

Average

Rainfall of 70 inches per annum is recorded in the almanac of Nigeria, so I can imagine what the poor Post Office Department men here go through with drop wire and stuff. ...

Time out for my mid morning tea and peanut butter sandwich. Anita says I am a glutton, but ah say ah'm jest hungry-lahke.

How wonderful that little Philinda is talking! William and I were both thrilled at the great news. We were also thrilled (but of course to a lesser extent) about John's making the Pocketbooks. I have managed to drag the fact into three or four conversations already this morning, with an appropriate nonchalant, we-have-it-every-day air, so that soon all Lagos will know that I am the Sister of a Colleague of Shakespeare. Tiens tiens.

As for the phonograph records, we don't have a phonograph and only one slight acquaintance who owns one, so I guess we will have to give up the idea. I can just imagine how sorry father will be to learn that.

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A lovely Sunday as usual, but not the same peaceful Saturday night as we had last week. We had a party for dinner and dancing at the Ebute Metta Club. It rained, but cleared up in time to go out there and stay till a ridiculously late hour. Mr. Rasmussen and his wife were among those present, a Mike Reid and wife (BRitish) of Shell Co., and MacM,lland and Fisher of PAA. I like Mac and Fish. We had a long and heated discussion of ~~the big executives~~, and fixed it all up for the big executives, if they only knew. Mr. Rasmussen is a card, and very nice indeed. His voice is back slightly, but still very squeaky indeed. He always commands universal attention, because he talks in whispers and people think it's a nice juicy scandal or something.

... William likes to go to symphonies and stuff, so I may yet learn to like music also. It's not that I don't want to.

The insurance documents are returned herewith, completed. I hope, that is. Not at all apropos, we loved the story of Mrs. Robb and the deserter at the Canteen. She certainly is a Helen Hokinson type.

Tomorrow I, accompanied by William, go to do my duty for the War Effort by attending a dance given by the local British Army contingents for the Non-commissioned officers, who are in all probability just so many hungry wolves from long isolation from white women. Husbands are expected NOT to dance with their wives, so I am told that they usually congregate in gloomy little groups and drag their wives away as soon as decently possible, but it is usually considered a worthy cause.

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Ye gods, I nearly forgot about the ants. We have them. A lot of them. I HATE THEM. THEY DRIVE ME MAD BY GETTING INTO MY TEA AND COFFEE IF I DON'T WATCH MY CUP EVERY MINUTE. URGENT! Please send me via the pouch a lot of assorted ant-killing devices, and maybe something for roaches. I say assorted in the event that one of them doesn't kill the little devils. Products such as these are unobtainable locally. Hopson's life is being made miserable by my constant screams for help. I rather like the pretty lizzards we have roaming around our walls. They are harmless and decorativley colored, and what's more eat ANTS and mosquitos. But ants I HATE, as mentioned in no uncertain terms above. I don't want to get used to them, thank you. I want to see them all die horrible deaths. Suggestions are invited, but concrete assistance is absolutely demanded. Perhaps you could send something for killing big game, and we can mix it with sugar. Well, anything will be tried. These ants are darned intelligent, the little beasts. I refuse to drink ants with my coffee and eat them with my toast. I absolutely refuse! Ugh! The other day I went to a garden tea party and all of a sudden looked down to see one leg absolutely black with driver ants. You can imagine my reaction. The noise was deafening.

Did I tell you Mr. Lynch mentioned that Mr. Shantz had spoken to him about getting away for perhaps a week or two sometime fairly soon? I mean us, not Mr. Shantz. I certainly hope so. I'd love to see Jos, and maybe even Kano, which is an old walled city where caravans still come in from across the Sahara. It is in the land of the Moslem Hausas, up north. Jos is more or less of a resort town up in the hills, but very pleasant, I'm told. I'd like to see Kano, but Jos will do if the other is inaccessible for us. here are plenty of ways of getting there, but all probably not available to us, as civilians and mere tourists. The Department has authorized simple leave for William, "subject to the exigencies of the Service"; meaning if he can get away at all, he's good. ...

Mr. Shantz left today to visit down in Leopoldville. They tell me Leo is wonderful, chuck full of all the things other parts of West Africa ran out of long ago. Silk stockings, good wines, American and English beer, and civilized hair-doing joints for the ladies. No petrol rationing. It must be the last paradise. Every one tells me it is a very nice little town, with sidewalk cafes and godd homes. That's another place I'd like to go sometime. Dreams, dreams! Also Nairobi, which is of course quite different and much more Europeanised than anything in West Africa. A well, some day...

Love to all, and thnak you for all past and future letters, which are much appreciated. I write once a week. Hmml

Lovingly,

LPK

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April 8, 1943

Dear People, especially Pop,

Do not, repeat not, write to me via ordinary sea mail. There is a very good system worked out by which you can get your letters to me in half the time: the diplomatic pouch. No objections to using it whatsoever. The system is simple. put the envelope addressed to me, here, and stamped to the amount of six cents, unsealed into another envelope addressed to the Department of State, Wash.DC. The outer envelope may be sealed, and a three cent stamp is of course required. Simple, isn't it? What's your objection to doing this? Of course, it is more expensive by four cents, but the pleasure I get when in receipt of a letter is so great that could you see my joy I am sure you would send it the other way every time if you knew.

On reading Dept's instructions re pouch service, I find they want you to write on thin Air Mail paper

My feet suffered enormously for the war effort last night at the Non-Commissioned Officer's party. They had a real live orchestra, Canadian ale, and ice cream and cakes. They were all very good dancers, much better than their superior officers in that line of endeavor. Three hours of it nearly laid me flat, however, due to the fact that there are a lot of non-commissioned officers and relatively few ladies, and all the non-coms were extremely energetic young men. William was not allowed to dance with me, and sat around getting bored and bored and holding desultory conversations with the other husbands, similarly deserted.

only for the pouch

On heading [heading] Dep't's instructions re pouch Service, I find they want you to write on thin Air Mail paper only for the

Lagos is a rather amazing place. A moment ago there was a terrific screeching from the back room, and a chicken dashed through the office followed closely by old Aliu Yaya, the Hausa gardener, who was brandishing an enormous garden scythe. The chicken sidestepped neatly and dashed into the office of Mr. Lynch, who was somewhat taken aback. Old Aliu edged her out, got her into a corner of the garden, and managed to get her by one wing. The screeching increased in intensity while Aliu was taking her over to our African neighbors where she lives in the courtyard amidst the children and the women. At each squawk Aliu gave her a moderate bump on the head with the handle of his scythe. A pretty sight that caused much merriment. ...

Nothing at present to add to the narrative. Oh no! The other night I became quite cold, and duck bumps appeared on my arms. The rainy season is approaching!

More love,

LPK