

Rua de São João da Mata, 119, 12
Lisboa, Portugal
19 de Fevereiro de 1948

Dearest Mother,

Sorry to be this late in the week with your letter, but have been delayed because I was somewhat under the weather with a cold and the doctor ordered me to do some resting. I must admit that before he ordered me to stay in the house for a few days, that was the kind of treatment I had been giving myself, even to the point of spending a few extra hours in bed. It seems unwise to us in the position in which we are now to delay in giving ourselves whatever treatment seems to be required by the body when it is under any strain. We are here to study. We must leave Lisbon as soon as possible, and we must reach Africa in some kind of Health. Perhaps we can afford to be a little sicksick, but nothing more than this if we can possibly avoid any more serious sicknesses. With these reasons in mind I am somewhat more cautious here than I was in the States last year. And I am beginning to note that I feel much better about going to bed at ten o'clock, or nine o'clock, or even eight o'clock, than I used to. We do change as we grow older, but this sort of occupation makes us more conscious of reasons for taking as good care as we possibly can of our physical selves.

I am much improved since Wednesday, I mean, Tuesday. How time flies! Tuesday afternoon I saw the doctor. He prescribed rest and a cough syrup, the likes of which I have not seen. It seems to have a drying effect on the afflicted areas. I going to have another frasco made up this afternoon and think that by tomorrow night I shall be well enough to go to our pot luck supper at the Henderson's apartment.

Say, you folks have really had a cold spell, haven't you? When we tell our few Portuguese friends about such cold they can scarcely believe it can be so. No one here has ever seen more than 5 or 6 degrees below zero. And such low temperatures occur only in the north of Portugal in the mountainous region.

What a shame that fire has caused more damage and loss on Strong. People will remember the fall of 1947 and the winter of 1948 for a long time. Dry and hot weather and fierce fires. Extreme cold for a long period, heavy snows and more fire. How handicapped the poor firemen must have felt, as handicapped as during the dry season. The hoses must have been very difficult to handle.

Thanks muchly for the Valentines. We all enjoyed them. Our Portuguese friends as well as the Steeds. We sure don't blame you for writing on them. It does cost to send our messages back and forth across the water, whichever the method of transportation, air or sea ways. The boys also enjoyed their Packard cars for a while. But it is difficult here in this house, which is something like a prison to chicken pox victims, to keep anything of cardboard nature for any length of time. Five minutes is a long time in our reckoning nowadays. By the way, we have seen one of the new Packards, the real thing, here in Lisbon. A smooth looking car, but costly. I believe the Portuguese government has stopped the importation of such luxury items, but this is a move of very recent origin.

Betty says that she has not written anything about the Carnaval which the people in Portugal celebrate just before the beginning of Lent. We did not see much of the festivities, but caught a glimpse of some of the costumes

which were worn by children mostly, but others by teen-aged girls and a few by some of the younger women. While I think of it let me tell you about one picture which I did not take, because I had run out of film. It would have been one of three peixeiras (fish women) dressed in their daily costumes but much cleaner and brighter than usual. Before I leave here I want to get a good pictures of a group of them. There was a girl with them, too, who was quite dressed up for Carnaval. She was the daughter I would gather of one of the peixeiras (peixe is the word for fish. Peixeira signifies fish carrier of the feminine class. Or fish woman). Before I ran out of film I got shots of several attractively gowned little misses in colorful Carnaval costumes.

I described somewhat the dresses to Ruby. Now I can do the same for you. But first, to elaborate a little more on the word and the festive occasion, Carnaval. I have used it a number of times, but have not told you anything about it really, except that it comes just before the season of Lent begins in the church calendar. February 8th the Portuguese call Domingo Gordo, or Fat Sunday. Probably, tho I'm not sure of this, the fat refers to the fat on meat. Carnaval begins on that day, and Carnaval is the season of eating meat before the fast season of Lent commences. The word comes from carne (meat) and the ending indicates a festival. That is. I am told this by one of our teachers. I see that in the dictionary the origin of the word is given as Italian and signifies the dance before the period of fasting. Well, all in all the Carnaval here is a combination feast and dancing observance. Like other customs it changes from time to time but during a generation remains pretty much the same. During three days, from Sunday through Tuesday, people celebrate by parties, masquerading, simple fireworks, noise-making, and taking a day off. To us it seemed something like Fourth of July, Hallowe'en and April Fool's Day rolled into one, with perhaps a touch of New Year's and Thanksgiving. About the latter, however, I'd guess that most people do not spend as extravagantly for turkeys as they do at Christmas time, rather than at Thanksgiving, as in the States. But the masking and costuming is like Hallowe'en, the funmaking like New Year's Eve funmaking, and the noise a little like the night before the Fourth. The greater part of this goes on during the day Tuesday, but we gather that there were parties from Sunday night on through Tuesday. We heard pre-celebration noises, as before our Fourth, and Hallowe'en. And the youngsters were using their squirt guns for two weeks before the actual days of festival. I took a picture of a costume one week before February 8, and other from Sunday on. I saw none after Tuesday. Tuesday I completed the taking of what few costumes I saw.

For fireworks the youngsters had a rather dangerous kind I thought. They were using the kind of material which the bombs we used to call torpedo bombs were made of. It's the kind of explosive which can be thrown and will explode, or can be scratched like a match and will give off fire and smoke. I can't remember the name, but am sure that the material is what I describe it to be. Noisemakers were in wooden ratchet type whirling devices and the whistles of ballons, or rosined strings with cardboard and thin paper amplifiers of cup shape. Probably at some of the parties there horns and other kinds of noise makers, but we saw none in the streets. For quiet playthings, knickknacks there were wooden snakes with four or five joints, serpentinhas (ribbons of vari-colored paper), bright balloons and confetti. Then of course the squirt guns, plastic boxes with a little valve inside through which water could be taken in and then squeezed out with some force. Some older young people used perfume in their squirters. Kenneth wanted one of these, but we managed to escape buying him one this time. Perhaps when he comes again to Lisbon...

Above is a rambling kind of description of some of the things used in celebrating Carnaval. How do the people go about their celebrating? Some dress up, in costumes varying from just masks to fancy dresses, from the clothing of the poor, which many people here can find fairly easily, to the beautiful costumes which are like those which have been until recent years quite customarily worn in some part of Portugal. Other dress as clowns. Quite frequently there were men dressed as women, but more frequently women dressed as men. In the public gardens the photographers did a good deal of business for three days. But the costumes of Portugal, national costumes, were quite lacking I should say. And the youngsters were dressed in costumes which delighted the fancy of the parents many times I think. But the majority of the dress-up ones were artfully done, and beautiful in design, form and colors. I hope later to have some pictures in color for you to see. Whether the colors are like those of the South American Carnaval costumes I dare not say. I saw no movies, and know too little about the South American ways, but there is apparently a similarity or two.

I got^A pictures of a pretty little girl with dark curls (quite typical of Portuguese youngsters of course, though some have very straight hair) in her clown suit of red with big black dots on it. I hope I caught some of the sparkle in her dark eyes under the white cap with its black dots. She was buying a balloon from the vendor when I took her picture and was all excited. I was not successful when I asked what I assume was a fond granddad for a picture of his teen-aged charming neta (granddaughter) in her becoming yellow silk full skirt with black hearts design appliqué, embroidered basque, vest, in black, with gold and red and blue threads as I remember, light blue kerchief under a flat, black, round and boxlike cap. I think she was wearing some sort of wooden shoe, but don't remember at all about stockings. Guess not much of the stockings showed, but I can imagine they were in keeping. The girl's complexion was dusky with rose. She had long dark curls and lovely eyes. Nose slightly curved. All in all a lovely picture. I wish I could have captured it in film, but her escort said no. After that I could have snapped, but decided not to. Too many photographers walk the Avenida de Liberdade where I saw this youngsters. They are always appearing to snap and then always handing out a card. I think the old man did not really hear me say that I was American. But because of deafness he did not hear, and he took me for a cameraman of the usual order. He did not want anything of the sort and so brushed me off. A few seconds later he and his neta stopped and I think she was saying that she would not mind having me take a picture, but of course the old gentleman had said no and could not very well turn about and say something different. And I did not ask again. Perhaps I should have. On the other hand, I might have been rebuffed again, and I would not have felt good about that. So-o-o-o, no picture. Later I got several which I hope will turn out, but enough of this and on to Tuesday night.

After using up my film on the costumes and crowds at Restauradores I went back to a simple afternoon party at our teacher's house and got sprayed with water immediately. Afterward heard a bit more about the customs of Carnaval, had tea and cakes and got back home in time to help take care of the boys and go out to the party at the Episcopal church. The young people of several churches put on a bang-up grand one-act play, written by one of them, followed by dramatic recitations and songs in harmony with the festive occasion. It was nicely done and fun on both sides, for the actors and the audience.

Now if I have omitted something, check with Ruby. But I think I have told you more than I told her. We got in late Tuesday night the 10th of February. But we thought that at least not all of the celebration was along the lines of eating much meat before the days of fasting began. Of course there is some licentiousness connected with some of the observances. I say "of course". I am told so. Meat eating is also taken in the figurative sense and apparently

the bodily appetites of men are exercised in more ways than one. Eating much meat is only one way. I think that there is very likely some extra heavy drinking and some extra heavy indulgence in the lovemaking of some men and women. Some apparently use the opportunity to overindulge in matters of sex. However, this is only what I hear. Perhaps it is not as bad as what I hear. And I saw people having a gay time walking in the streets and enjoying free time from their labors. A time to parade and show off your children seemed to me to be the key to the celebration for many parents. A time for clowning seemed to be the key to the celebration for many in their teens and twenties. A gala day before the forty days of Lent should begin. I saw no signs that the Catholic church here frowned upon any of the observances.

Now more about us. Tommy is just about over his chickens. Joy and Catherine are, too. Kenneth is entirely recovered and full of life. Boy, oh boy! You understand me of course. Although Tommy is also full of life. He had a bit of fever for two nights and was restless, but slept well last night, and did not wet his bed. We have hopes that before he is three he will be quite ready to stop wetting the bed for keeps. Kenneth rarely wets now. Occasionally when he has had a little extra water to drink before going to bed, he will have an accident, but this is seldom.

Both boys are learning so many things now that it's hard to keep pace with them. Kenneth talks a blue streak. But Tommy is not to be outdone. He can say almost all of "Jack and Jill" by himself. He also sings along with Kenny at table when we sing grace and before bedtime when we sing "Mary had a little lamb", "Hickory-dickory-dock", "Three blind mice", "Three little kittens", "O do you know the muffin man", "Scotland's burning", "Jingle bells", "Baa, baa black sheep", "Little Bo-peep", "Little Boy Blue", "Jesus Loves Me", "Away in a manger", and "Brother John."

And were we surprised yesterday morning! When Kenney got into bed with us, something prompted me to ask him if he knew which hand was which. When I asked which was his right hand, he stuck it up without hesitation. And when I asked him then which was his right eye, he told me as quickly, and the same thing for the right ear. I asked then which was his left hand, and he came back without pause, and did the same for eye and ear. So far, so good! Of course it was natural to think then about Tommy, who was with me on the other side of the bed. For the first question Tommy stuck up left hand instead of right, but changed it in almost a flash. And then he answered the same questions I had asked Kenny almost as quickly as Kenny had answered them. He's either an awfully good imitator or he knows a good deal for a two and a half year old. He's quicker at responding now than Kenneth was at the age of two and a half. This morning I asked the questions again to see how Tommy would reply, not how Kenny would reply, because Kenny is sure. Now that he knows, and we don't attempt very often to shake him. When we do, we find him sticking to his guns. But we were not sure of Tommy quite. And he hesitates just a bit we found. But when I asked him this morning about his left hand, after having asked him several questions about right hand, right eye and ear and so on, he did not respond with sticking up his hand, but stuck his thumb in his mouth, intentionally. And the gleam in his eyes was of sheer mischievous delight. What I want to know is this, is he your grandson or Pop Dorr's?

Lots of love, from your son and Mummy and the boys to Gammie and Aunt Olf,

Macchie

X from H & G
X from T & G
X from T & G

PS - Something has gone awry in the office and your check is being delayed again. Sorry.

February 14, 1971

Dearest Mum & Olive

Another week and my turn to write to you all again! It doesn't seem possible. How much we are enjoying your package Tommy's favorite book since it arrived is "The Top Shop". I can almost quote it by heart, now. All of us like Kennie's poem. It is the best little book of reflections I have ever seen. The calendar is just the sort of thing, both the picture which we love and its usefulness. But nothing that anyone could send in a package would mean half as much as your letters which come so regularly. Olive's arrival on Tuesday and mother's on Thursday, occasionally it is Wednesday or Friday. How long is the space between Thursday night and Friday noon when it happens! Again, we had a wonderful devotional meeting at Henderson's last Sunday night. The inspiration of it has stayed by me all week. Last night I got to thinking about you and the spirit with which you sent Mary off. Surely someone has made as great a sacrifice in our going to Africa as you. Not the people in Everett who support us and not we ourselves. We miss our families in America and often long for them but we did the same in Alabama. The richness of the fellowship of the missionaries you have given us has given us something we ~~never~~ never found elsewhere. We thought we were Christians before we came. Here we realize how many times we have to say "Lord have mercy on us sinners". The thing that stands out to me today as strongly is the way you folks passed the real test of Christianity, and mum you sent Mary off with out malice without fear and without show of tears. We are both grateful and I don't forget to thank God for a mother like you. This experience in Portugal is being awful good for us. Our health - all of us - is really excellent. Kennie and Tommie are just getting over chicken pox but they had it very lightly. In fact if Kennie hadn't had it noticeably we would never have known that Tommie had it.

Feb. 12 -

On one letter sometime back you wondered if Kennie's sickness was the reason we didn't have Thanksgiving. It wasn't the reason. You see the students are Canadian and their Thanksgiving is in October and they don't observe it as much as we do anyway. Also, the Sunday before Thanksgiving the Hendersons arrived and we were busy getting them settled and attending classes so we just had a devotional service in the morning and saved the Turkey for Christmas.

We have some pictures of the children taken yesterday
day which we will send along as soon as our trip follows.
Probably our pictures will come by slow mail mostly
from now on. I took Tommy and Annie to the park
and for a long walk, yesterday. They were so good we had
a lovely time. When we first came, Tommy didn't want to
walk at all. He wanted to be carried all the time. Yesterday
he didn't even sit down on door steps but tramped along
taking in all the sights and asking innumerable
"what's at, mummy?" and what's at there, for? or what's
at doing there? They sing a grade at table, Jesus songs me
away in a manger and a Sunday school song about hiding
your light under the bushel as well as loads of memory
rhymes very well. At night before they go to bed we usually
sit and sing for half an hour we turn off the lights
and make believe the person's burner is a fireplace
it really does very well. Sometimes Daddy plays them on
the saw. Kestrie has shortened all of our naps
now so we are D.D., Mummy and Tom. He did it himself
without hearing anyone else. Their newest and most
enjoyable joy is a step ladder it cost about 2 dollars
and how they enjoy it ever. Katharine has learned to climb
up and down it. Sylvia predicted dire results in the
way of falls. As far as I know fallen from it although
they have all fallen from chairs, beds etc. before we got
it. We went to a show put on by the young people of
the ~~young~~ church's last night before last. They had a play that
one of them had written. I never saw a better movie. Laughed
so that I got so warm I had to take off my coat. After the play
they told stories, recited poems, sang, played the harmonica
the banjo and piano. Half the time I forgot I was at
home at first such an affair in Brooklyn Harbor.
Singing or Pelham. Now I got to sign off. Mail this,
and get to class. I thank you so much for being such a sweet
mother, raising such a swell son and sharing him with
me and the rest of the world in such a Christian spirit.
Love, you are sweet, too. Love, mother

February 27, 1948

Dear Mother and Olive,

Mom's letter came day before yesterday. We were so sorry to hear about Olive's being sick. I sure hope she is better now.

Mom had a bad cough and I made him stay in bed a week and this week he is going strong. The boys and I have a magnificent cold but it does not deny their energy a bit.

Joy and Kathryn Glad were so tickled with their valentine! When mother seemed so surprised that anyone would be so thoughtful. They have found

(2)

a house by themselves, now and we do enjoy them, but it is nice to have the whole house to ourselves, too. The boys have a combination bedroom and playroom and they spend the rest of it. With only two students of four years ago we spend our study time more quiet, too.

February 29, 1948

Since I started this letter we have received letters. I am glad you have a good doctor in Norway and very glad that your attack isn't helped you down. As I read what you said about people being confident about there since chicken pox in Portugal

I thought that perhaps in our letters we have talked too much about the differences and not enough about the likeness of our countries.

Only last week two instances made me see more clearly how Christ's love dissolves all differences in the sameness of His nature.

Previously I had shown Mrs. Silver one of my professors, a coat that Everett Church had sent me. It is a lovely coat but a little large. I was asking about someone to alter it. She suggested someone immediately and wanted me to go right off. I told her it would suit me better financially to visit until the next month. She thought we ~~were~~ might be suffering

4)

for lack of money so last Friday she came with a whole package of groceries including two pounds of sugar at better than twenty cents a pound. It reminded me of Pelham. She has five children and not very much money. I couldn't help being impressed. Yesterday, Fernanda the ~~of~~ one of the nurse maids who got married came to take me to see her new home. I couldn't go because Kennise had another earache and I didn't want to leave him. When she discovered that my dishes weren't done, she just took off her coat and washed them. Like Pelham again? Kennise is O.K. tonight.

(8)

tonight. I have learned how
to persuade him to keep his
poker in his ear so that when
he gets punchy he can hear when
speakers has a bad cold. We
had a cold wave here last week
and it is it cold today, it
is like summer again.

May and the boys are play-
ing the record player preparatory
to going to bed

main table (later)

The boys are in bed and me-
think I'll go there, too.

Much love and a prayer
for God's blessing of joy, peace
and happiness which finds us
close even across an ocean
or two. Love, Betty & Bill