

P.S. Guess this address means Street of St. John of the Woods, but haven't been able to check it yet.

Rua de São João da Mata, 119, 19  
Lisboa, Portugal  
16 Novembro 1947

(Keep)

Dearest Mother,

Perhaps I can pick up where I left off last week and tell you a bit more about the celebration of the anniversary of the saving of Almada from the tidal wave which followed the tremor de Terra (earthquake) in 1755. We did not see all of it, the celebration, but enough I think to get some idea of it. At least one idea we have in connection with it is that it is observed by some people in much the same way that we would observe the Fourth. There were dozens of rockets being set off over the water very close to the landing place of the ferry which crosses between Lisbon and Almada. Betty and Kenny and I had been visiting at Sr. Holden's house in Almada with some others of the missionaries here and were just getting back to the boat when we saw the activities of the celebration. The celebration had been going on for some time, and the procession of boys and men of the church with the images had traveled up the street we had used going from the boat to Sr. Holden's and had come back by a different route to the wharf. How much farther it went afterward I don't know. It was supposed to go to the bank of the river, but I cannot say whether it did or not because we could not stay to see. The ferry ran on schedule, and we went with the ferry, although we should have liked to see more. We heard the noise of the rockets before we reached the boat landing, as we were returning after tea with the Holdens. When we came within sight of the landing we also saw the procession, which was coming out of another street close to the one we were making our exit from. In front came small boys and banners, then larger boys with an image of the Virgin Mary on their shoulders, then more younger boys and behind them other boys carrying torches. These were followed by older men carrying a large size crucifix. Behind these were older men, probably of the church, and with them the statue, image, of the saint who had protected the inhabitants of Almada in 1755. There was something more than this, but I did not see well what it was. Perhaps I was more engrossed then in looking at the rocket display, for there was a continual roar of the sound of exploding rockets, and a steady flashing of light from them as they swished upward one immediately after the other. Of course to aid to the excitement there would be one of these fiery-tailed bolts very often going wild and landing near the crowd or spewing its multi-colored explosive pills directly over the heads of the onlookers. I was even a little fearful that one would come close enough to the boat to do some damage. Since we had by that time gotten on to the boat I looked with other than a happy eye at the kind of celebration which I saw going on. It did not appeal to me then, and still does not appeal.

Well, with this let me say goodnight and I'll come back to finish this tomorrow morning, because there is not time now (11:30 pm) although it is only about six o'clock back home. I must wake Betty up and get both of us off to bed.

Back again after a day at classes and traveling up and down the town hunting for a potty chair for Tommy, who does not like the toilet seat we have where we are now. The seat is too wide for Tommy to sit on comfortably and he has done some rebelling against using the same. Saturday I was unsuccessful in finding anything that we wanted. Today my success has been a little more, but not good enough. Tomorrow perhaps I will find something I hope that will serve the purpose. The difficulty is to get something practical, made for a boy in the first place, and large enough in the second place. The children in Lisbon don't get to be very big apparently before they outgrow their potty chairs. At least the chairs are small in size.