

from now on send our mail to our Africa
address.

Rua Maestro Antonio Tarborda, 6
September 11, 1948

Dear Mum, Olive, Ruby, Francis, & Ralph,

How free we feel! We have finished the university ^{course} and have received our diplomas which we hope will mean something to the Portuguese consul in New York when we want to obtain visas for entry into Angola.

We have all the necessary governmental documents at hand to leave here the twentieth for Angola aboard the new and fast "Patrião". This boat will get us to Lobito in ten days the same time it took to come here from New York. It is our good fortune that we are ready to go at this particular time instead of at another which would mean from twenty three to twenty eight days.

Part of the university course was a couple of excursions to famous parts of Portugal. I missed the first but the second was very interesting. We visited "Queluz" one of the royal palaces. The wall paper is made of rich silk material. Of course it is enormous and generously decorated in gold and also with venetian chandeliers. The throne room was used this summer to entertain the midshipmen during their visit here.

Our next stop was Mafra, a convent of the 18th century. It has seven thousand five hundred doors and I do not remember how many windows. (I ~~was not~~ / ~~remember~~ / ~~if~~ / ~~forget~~ I got tired of counting) At one time it was also used as a palace for one of the kings. The game (wild) room and the library are very interesting. The chairs in the game room are made of the antlers and skins of various victims of the hunt. In the library they counted us as we went in and went out. I wasn't very successful in reading the ancient manuscripts.

In the church we had to catch our breaths. The statuary is so intricately done I felt as if I was in a dream. The lace work on the clothes of the people sculptured was perfectly reproduced.

There is an interesting history connected with this convent. The king ordered a set of bells to be made in Italy. The order was so large that they thought there must be some mistake so they sent backword to the king asking him if he cared for so many. He responded "No- double the order." Now there ~~are~~ two beautiful sets of bells each installed in a beautiful tower.

We had dinner in an elegant hotel in "Caldas de Rainha." The menu consisted of: first course omelet with ham and tomatoes; second course, fried fish and rice; roast beef and french-fries; a delicious pudding, and finally grapes and peaches and pears. The missionaries, about twenty five of us, drank water. The others had two kinds of wine.

We were supposed to go from here to the mouth of the river and from there, by boat up a long lagoon to a castle and there be greeted by the town fathers. But all the foreign students upset the apple cart. While waiting for the professors to come to the bus we dashed off to a place that sells Portuguese pottery. Since most of us were women you can imagine that we tarried too long and so missed the boat ride and had to go in the very unromantic bus to the castle. "his castle- "O Castelo de Obidos"- is the most interesting I have seen. It is surrounded by a wall that is still intact and inside is a village. It was just like walking back into the middle ages with now and then a glaring such as an AGFA film sign sticking out over the door of a small shop.

This has been a profitable and interesting year. We have made many friends whom we hate to leave but we shall be glad to be on our way to some real work in Africa.

I have so many letters that I decided to try to make carbon copies of one I wrote to Dad and add my special letter to you folks. Then, I'd only have to describe our trip once. As you can see I still have a lot of practicing to do before I can type half correctly.

We are all in good health now.