

Rua de São João da Mata, 119, 1^a
Lisboa, Portugal
2 Fevereiro 1948

Dearest Mother,

Shall I, dare I, tell you what we're having here for weather? Of course, it is about what you would expect it to be in this country, but we heard stories about winters here in Portugal before we left the states and we have been prepared all winter long for something far worse than what we have seen. We have had a few rainy days and a few cold days, but on the whole the weather has been as warm as our fall weather in New England, and much of the time like early fall or late summer at that. And now there is a breath of primavera, spring, in the air. It is not good to sit in a draft here of course, anymore than it is good to do the same thing at home, but tonight at six o'clock I had a class with one of my teachers in a room with the windows wide open and was very comfortable. Any way you look at it, it's a far cry from snow and blow.

But whether the weather's warm or cold children will be sick just the same. Don't be upset now. This time it's just the chicken pox and probably by the time you get this letter both boys will be nearly over their bexigas locas (foolish pox). Thomas had just a little bit of rash to begin with and it has amounted to little more than that. But Kenneth has had several huge pox showing for several days. We hope that their won't be any bad scars, and think there will not be because, despite the size of some of the pustules, his case, too, is rather mild. And both of them are wild Indians in their actions. Trying to keep them at all confined is like trying to hold a couple of growing calves in hand.

Happy to say that we've had help in containing them within the house and away from the Steed children for the most part. Joy and Kathy may come down yet. Since we don't know where and when the boys picked up the disease we cannot say whether or not the girls may have encountered the same boy or girl and may finally show with the spots. I guess we'll be able to take care of them so far as toys go, however. Two Canadian girls who are very friendly with the family brought a plastic car for Tommy and a dog that does everything but bark for Kenny. The dog is made of small pieces of wood, head separate, neck separate, body separate, tail in three pieces, each leg in two, and four pieces for the feet. These are held together by a cord on the inside. The whole is set on a box inside which is a spring affair which can be moved here and there to make the dog do tricks. We call the thing coitadinho, which means, "poor thing," and Kenneth calls it by that name and so does Tommy. Then I have bought them a stepladder to climb on, and do they climb. Besides this, we received for them some toys from Everett. I got them from the customs house today. We have let the boys have ~~two~~ automobiles only. The rest will appear from time to time.

Oh, me, I see I forgot to put in a second note in respect to the weather. Hal Steed and I have decided that the rain here in Lisbon is about the wettest we have ever encountered. In five minutes out in one without an umbrella my cotton raincoat becomes completely soaked despite its water repellent qualities. And shoes become soaked almost as soon. My pant legs, too, will be quite drenched. I guess the same thing is true in Africa, only there the rain comes in the hot season.

There, let me take my breath again and see what we have not written to you about. What would you like to hear about now. More about the children of