

*Will get this when
we come down*

Missão de Ohissamba
Nova Sintra
1 de Julho de 1949

Dearest Mother and Olive,

Well, here we are crowding mailtime again. Your letter of June 20 arrived on last Tuesday's mail and since we haven't answered it, and some others, we'll make a hurried attempt now. Hope for a more leisurely written letter a bit later.

We're happy to hear that you've gotten news at last of Susan's arrival. She's asleep just now after a hearty feeding of pure mother's milk. Betty has enough to feed our darling daughter and we're sure that she has gained a pound and more, but having neglected to weigh her today we cannot say exactly how much she has gained. We must take time now to measure all the children and send height, feet sizes and so on of them all, including foot prints and hand prints, or outlines, of our Susan.

We sent you her African name, didn't we ? The other day I sent to the American consulate at Luanda what will be Susan's official name. This will be the one under which she will be registered in the consulate records. It is Susan Cassova Maude Welch. Betty and I both thought for some time about the matter of an African name among the English ones, considering even the long one of Susan Cassova Maude Chissamba Welch. But it seemed a much too long name to give to one of our children, and we compromised with the shorter by one Susan Cassova Maude. The spelling of Cassova is the Portuguese way, also it would be our American way. Kasova is the way the Ovimbundu spell the name.

Have you told Myra Ayotte that the child will most certainly be an American citizen, although born on African soil in a Portuguese colony? The Department of State has taken care of such matters. Susan is therefore an American citizen and will not have to be naturalized.

We've already told you something about our dry season, haven't we ? The winds are now increasing each day in volume and velocity. It's a rare thing to see a cloud now. The nights are cold, and even during the day, particularly the forenoons, we notice a freshness to the wind which quite occasionally reminds us of the wintertime in Maine or Massachusetts. No zero weather of course, but pretty close to freezing weather in the small hours of the night, and the pre-dawn hours can be terrifically chilling. We have a small fire running during the day in our fireplaces and a larger one at night. In the dining room, which does not have a fireplace, we use the primus stove for the half hour it takes to eat breakfast. We all use two blankets on the bed, that is, except Susan, who has anywhere from four to six, along with hot water bottle. We wonder how it is ~~is~~ that the Africans sleep with only one blanket for bedding, or straw underneath and one blanket for covering, or perhaps only cotton cloths. We know that they snuggle together for warmth, but their houses are for the most part quite open, much more so than ours with their proper doors and windows, so that the wind must make the hours when people should be sleeping many times very wakeful hours. It is a situation which causes us much concern; yet I suppose that there are many of these folk much better off in material comforts nowadays than they were fifty years ago. However, there is still pneumonia, and other sicknesses which flourish in cold weather still strike down the African. Clothing and housing are not all they should be certainly, but when they will be we cannot say.

Well, the mail boy is here. Thanks for the picture of that husky boy. Ralph. Greetings to all. Our love and our prayers. God be with you.

Lachie