

Missão do Dondi
Bela Vista
Angola, Portuguese West Africa
October 19, 1950

Dear Folks,

Yes here we are again at Dondi. Calangue missionaries are spending all together too much time at the big metropolis. The ones are still here. However Bertha is getting along fine after her operation and will soon be going home. This time Max is the patient. He had a pain in his side and the native nurse took a blood count and found a difference in white blood corpuscles. He said that he had better go to the doctor in Dondi. The Doctor here thought that it might be the mumps that had passed by his face and settled below. Just to complicate matters he had a good case of malaria too. Now he is sitting up for the first time. He looks sort of pale face but I expect the rest he is getting will do him a lot of good. He has had twenty four shots of penicillin, a full dose of atabrine, quinine, and aralen. One thing you may be sure of if you get sick in Africa - you will get plenty of medicine. When we got to Dondi we found that Kenny was sick with a bad cold and malaria. This and April are the worst times of the year for malaria. In April the ponds and streams are beginning to dry up and the mosquito hunts for a new home. Now the heat just before the cooling rains come cause all the eggs in the permanent streams to hatch. Kenny is fine now.

Susan is as husky as ever. Max tells her that her joy in living keeps every body's disposition on an even keel and brightens up the day. Tommy has stopped sucking his thumb and just like that. He went on an over night trip with his father to Kaala and Nova Lisboa. His father came across a second hand bicycle in good condition and decided that he could sell the two tricycles for enough to pay for it. Tommy just couldn't believe that it was his very own bicycle to keep. All that day his father kept assuring him that if he stopped sucking his thumb it was his. The shock of his new possession was so great that he was able to surplant his thumbsucking with the joy of his new possession. He rides it like an old hand now.

We had a good honest thunder shower last night. Only when you have been five months without rain can you appreciate the beauty and the feeling of security that a good heavy clap of thunder brings with it. The world is beautiful this morning. The frangi pani is blooming. A few remnants of the poinsettias remain and new greenness is everywhere. Tommy is having a good time visiting school and playing with all the children here in Dondi.

Well, Mother I'll see if I can manage enough strength to operate this machine. They have let me sit up a while today and walk from one room to another. This afternoon I shall be permitted to do the same thing I trust. Margaret Childs gave the final penicillin shot last night. I've been pretty well dosed up, and the first thing this morning felt weak, perhaps because of the lack of support which the medicine was giving.

Since the first of September things have been rushing along at the mission because we had planned a program which was full to begin with and because then the burden of carrying the program out fell on two instead of four sets of shoulders. It may have been that and having Betty sick for a while with an attack of malaria, that put me on my back. However, we are still thinking in terms of maintaining a program that will consist of keeping all branches of the work going with African staff, those who can take over responsibility, with the hope that improvements can be made as time goes on and all the work more easily done.

Oct. 20 Max is stronger today. He shaved himself and dressed and is pounding away on the typewriter with some Missão business that has to be typed before the mail leaves today. We had a hail storm yesterday afternoon with hail stones as big as moth balls. The kids were wild with excitement. Love Betty call us.